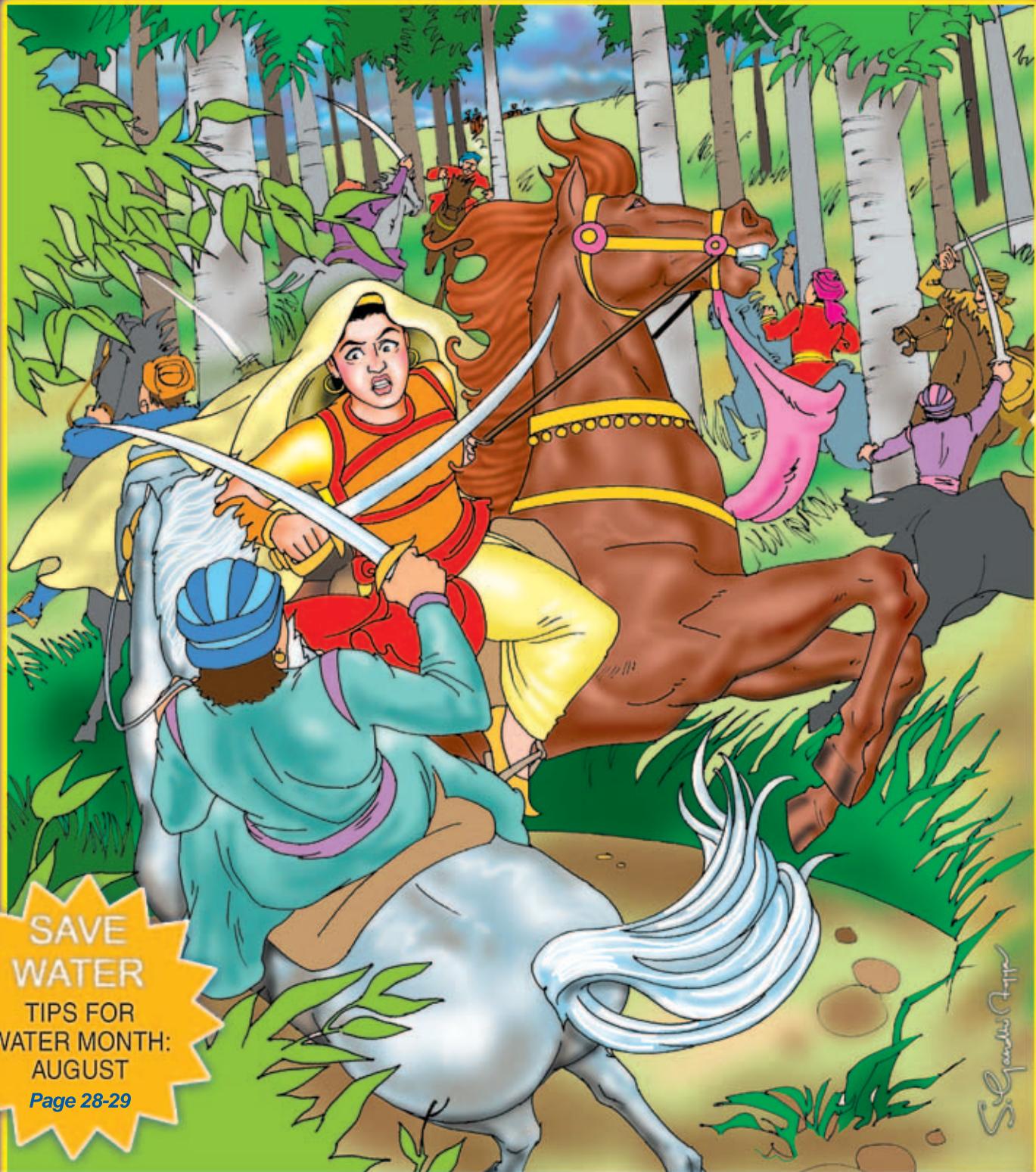




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*Page 28-29*

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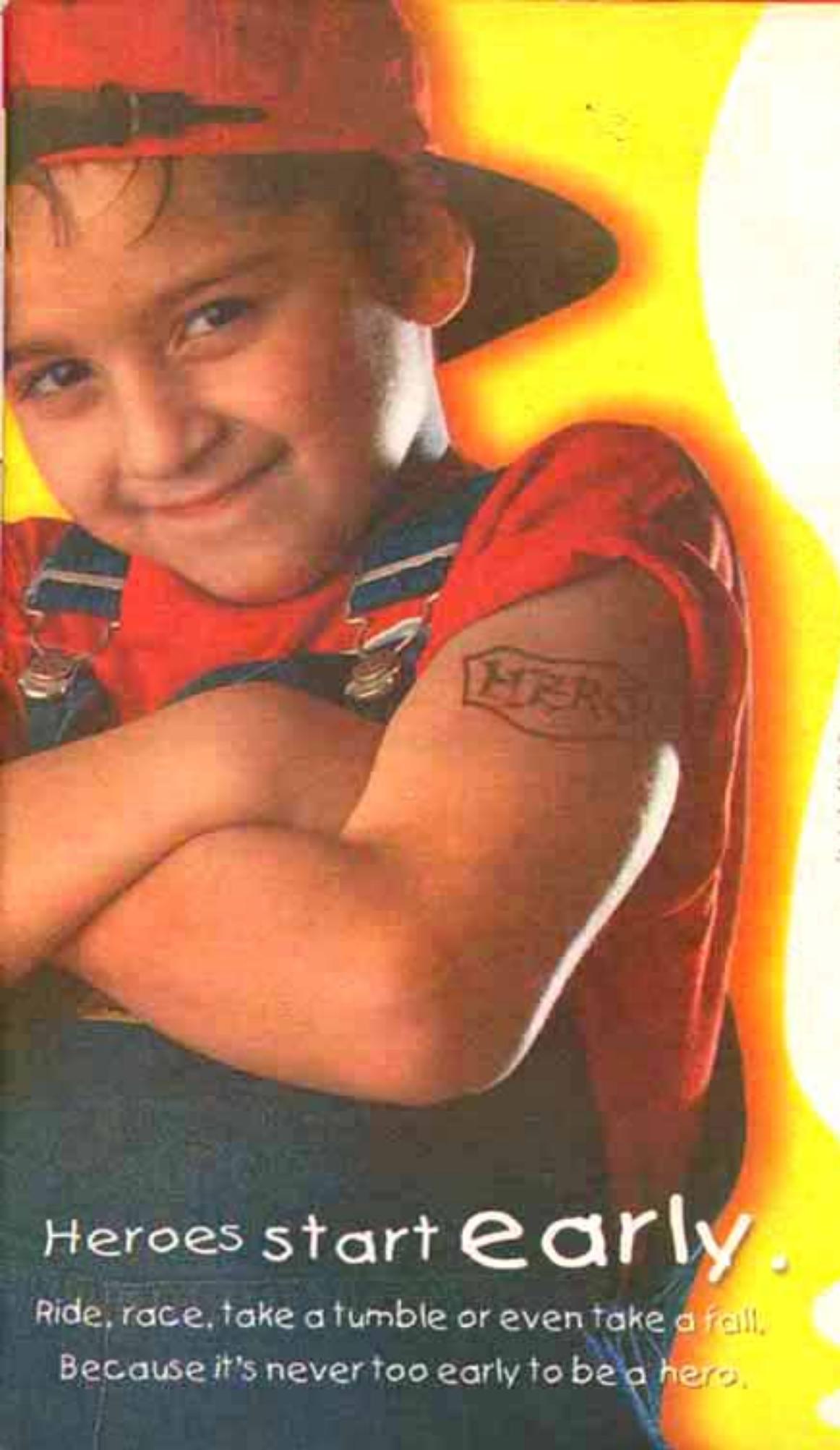


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YANKEE  
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Through the  
Burning Forest  
(From the pen  
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Fall of a Kingdom  
(New Tales of King Vikram  
and the Vetal)



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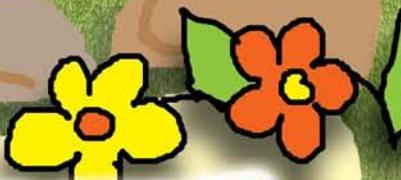
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# SECRET OF LASTING PEACE



**P**eace has always been a dream of humanity. From time to time statesmen have worked towards that goal. Fifty years ago, two great countries of Asia, India and China, resolved to live as good neighbours. At the invitation of the Prime Minister of India, Jawaharlal Nehru, the Prime Minister of China, Zhou En-lai, visited India in 1954. He was accorded a warm welcome by tens of thousands of people who flocked to see him; the air was filled with shouts of *Hindi-Chini Bhai Bhai* (India and China are brothers).

India and China signed a document famous as *Panch Sheel* or Five Principles of Peaceful Co-existence. The spirit of Panch Sheel required that the two countries should never be hostile to each other.

Prime Minister Nehru paid a visit to China three months later. He, too, was given a rousing reception in that country. It appeared that the friendship between the two countries that had begun some two thousand years ago, in the 1<sup>st</sup> century itself when Kasyapa Matanga and Dharma Raksha, two Buddhist teachers, visited China, followed by several Chinese scholars coming to India, had received a boost.

Alas, it is difficult to say what went wrong. China suddenly launched an attack on the Indian territory in 1962, but declared a ceasefire soon afterwards. China and India are once again coming closer. The recent visit to China by Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee has been greeted with great hope for the future. We ardently wish that the hope will be justified.

*Founded by*  
B. Nagi Reddi  
Chakrapani  
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*Editorial Advisors*  
Ruskin Bond,  
Manoj Das  
*Consultant Editor*  
K.Ramakrishnan

## Words of Wisdom

*There are thousands to tell you it  
cannot be done,  
There are thousands to prophesy  
failure;  
There are thousands to point out  
to you, one by one,  
The dangers that wait to assail  
you.*

## It couldn't be done

*But just buckle right in with a bit  
of a grin,  
Then take off your coat and go to it;  
Just start in to sing as you tackle the  
thing  
That cannot be done, and  
you'll do it.*

*Edgar A. Guest*

Enter the Heroes of India Quiz and win fabulous prizes

# Heroes of India - 23

Here are some of the leaders of our nationalist movement. Do you know them?

1

I spent nearly 10 years in jail between 1920 and 1947. I was the first Prime Minister of India. That's a give away. Name me.

2

I established 'Abhinav Bharat', an international revolutionary institute. A freedom fighter, I wrote the history of the First War of Indian Independence in Marathi. Do you know my name?

3

I'm popularly known as the Iron Man of India. Who am I?

4

I was held responsible for the bombing of Lord Hardinge's procession in 1912. I was closely associated with the Indian National Army. Do you know me?

5

I spearheaded the Salt Satyagraha in 1930 in Bihar. I was also the first President of the Indian Republic. What is my name?

Three all correct entries will receive bicycles as prizes.\*



Fill in the blanks next to each question legibly. Which of these five is your favourite hero and why? Write 10 words on **My favourite national hero is**

.....

.....

Name of participant:.....

..... Age:..... Class:.....

Address:.....

.....

.....

Pin:..... Ph:.....

Signature of participant:.....

Signature of parent:.....

Please tear off this page and mail it to:

**Heroes of India Quiz-23**

CHANDAMAMA INDIA LIMITED

No.82, Defence Officers' Colony

Ekkatuthangal, Chennai - 600 097.

On/before **September 5, 2003.**

#### Instructions

1. The contest is open to children in the age group 8-14 years.
2. \*Three winners will be selected for this contest from entries in all the language editions. **Winners will receive bicycles of appropriate size.** If there are more than one all correct entries, winners will be selected on the basis of the best description of **My favourite hero.**
3. The judges' decision will be final.
4. No correspondence will be entertained in this regard.
5. The winners will be intimated by post.

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## Swansong from Veena

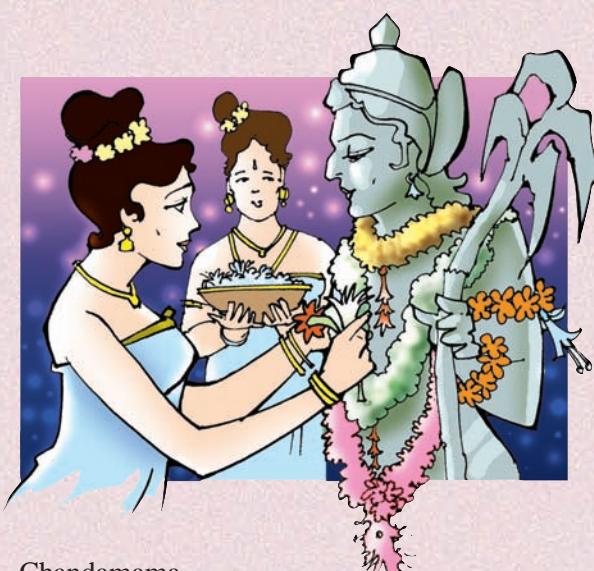
Tanjore in Tamilnadu is famous for, among other things, the Veena, the divine instrument of goddess Saraswati. The only other place in south India where Veenas and Tanpuras are made is Simpadipura, a village 20 km from Doddaballapur in Karnataka. Many of the 150 Dalit families there had been engaged in veena-making. Unfortunately, the number of artisans so employed has been dwindling in recent times, because the jackfruit wood used for the main part of the veena and tanpura has become costly, the people do not have enough money to invest in the wood, there are not many buyers, and stocks in the shops are not moving. The patriarch of Simpadipura is septuagenerian Penobblaya. He learnt the art of veena-making some 50 years ago and brought the art to Simpadipura. He does not remember how many instruments he himself has made, but is certain that many of them have crossed the seven seas. "It is the Veena that has educated us, fed us, and got us our land," say many of his 'disciples'.

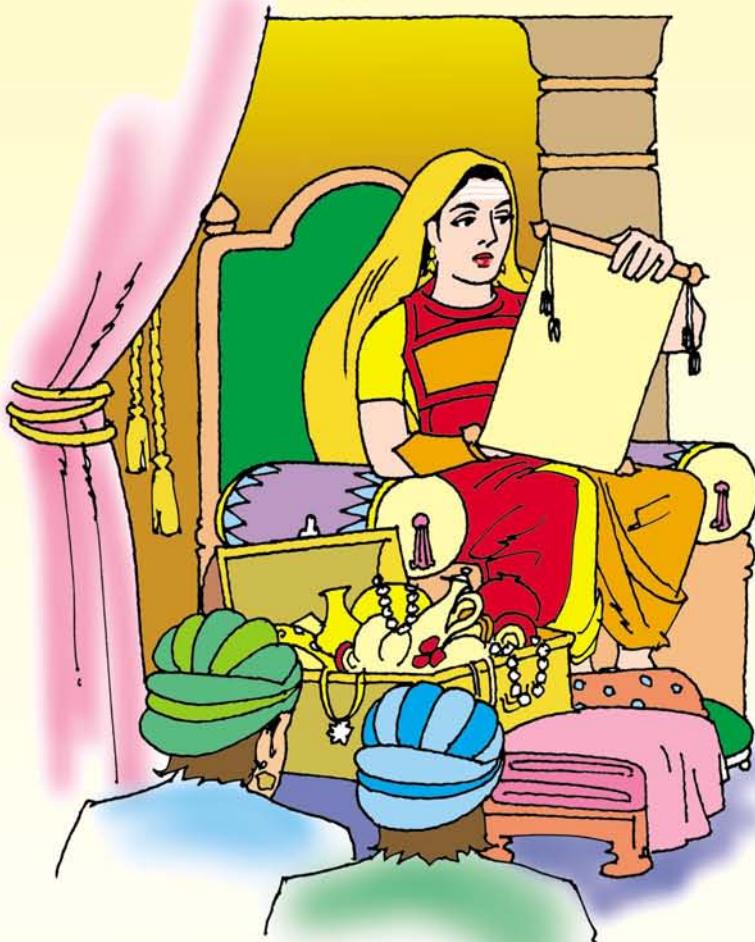


## In worship of Cupid

During March-April, when there would be plenty of flowers, girls in north Malabar, in Kerala, make idols of Kamadeva, the Cupid in Hindu mythology, and offer worship. This they do during a

nine day festival held in temples of the Divine Mother in the form of Bhagavathi. In Hindu mythology, the story is told of Parvati wishing to marry Siva and requesting Kamadeva to influence the Lord, who was then in deep meditation. Kamadeva sent one of his arrows of flowers at Siva. In anger, the Lord opened his third eye which emitted fire reducing Kamadeva to ashes. His consort, Rati, who was overcome by grief, appealed to Siva to bring back her husband to life. The Lord then advised her to make an idol of Kamadeva with flowers and worship him. The festival in Bhagavathi temples, called Pooram, commemorates Rati's worship of Kamadeva. The girls pray for getting suitable partners in life.





We are only too familiar with the name of Lakshmibai, the Rani of Jhansi, who was one of the leaders of the Indian Mutiny of 1857. Some thirty years before the Mutiny, Rani Chennamma of Kittoor, a small kingdom in Karnataka, had risen in revolt and fought the mighty British army, unsuccessfully though. Rani Chennamma, who ruled Keladi, another small kingdom in Karnataka, more than two hundred years earlier, had come face to face with the Mughal army, which eventually retreated after losing several captains, horses, and war material.

The story goes how Emperor Aurangzeb wanted to annex Chhatrapati Shivaji's Maratha kingdom, which

was then being ruled by his son Rajaram, who offered a stiff resistance. The advancing army, by dubious methods, managed to kill Rajaram's brother, Sambhaji. Rajaram was forced to run away donning different disguises. When he was refused asylum by the neighbouring rulers, he proceeded to Keladi, where Chennamma offered shelter and later gave him escort to reach the fort in Jinji.

Word reached the emperor that Rajaram was under the protection of Chennamma. He sent her a message, along with some rich gifts, asking her to surrender Rajaram. Chennamma consulted her ministers and sent a reply, saying Rajaram had only passed through Keladi, she did not know where he had proceeded to, and Keladi had no enmity with the Mughals.

Though the reply was couched in polite terms, Chennamma could very well guess that the Mughal army would already be heading to Keladi. Her spies proved her right, and she got ready to offer a fight. The way to Keladi was through a thick forest. So, Chennamma and her soldiers waited for the enemy in the forest itself. The Mughal soldiers found the forest terrain difficult to cross, as they were used to the dry level ground of the north. To make matters worse, it started raining, too. The Mughal army was under the command of the emperor's son, Prince Azamath Ara.

Chennamma and her soldiers fought a relentless battle. When the Mughal commander realised that they were losing ground, he himself came forward to encounter Rani Chennamma. Sword met sword, and the Prince did not have to wait for long to realise that he was no match to the Rani. He did not wish to suffer humiliation at the hands of a woman. At the nick of the moment, he retreated. To save the situation, he received a message from the emperor that he should proceed to Jinji after entering into a pact with Chennamma.

# The rise and fall of a kingdom



**B**raving the rain and the sharp cool breeze, King Vikram went back to the tree. He climbed it and brought down the corpse again and resumed his journey through the deserted cremation ground. He was greeted by eerie laughter and weird shrieks from all around.

But he did not care and continued to advance with firm steps.

Suddenly the vampire which possessed the corpse said, "O King! I do not know whether one prospers by the benevolence of gods or by one's own efforts. Let me tell you the story of Vijay. That should help you to find the answer to this question."

The vampire went on to narrate the story: In days gone by, there was a large forest in this country. Several tribes lived in the forest, more or less in a primitive way.

Vijay was a youth of one such tribe. He was extraordinarily intelligent and capable of influencing people. In due course, he was acknowledged as the king of the tribe. He established order and discipline among his people and brought prosperity to them.

Another tribe of forest-dwellers lived adjoining Vijay's territory. They were adept in magic. With the help of their art, they had built magnificent houses and amassed much wealth. Vijay raided their land. Their magic failed before Vijay's intelligence and enterprise. They were obliged to recognise Vijay as their king.

Now, Vijay's domain grew bigger, and his people's prosperity grew. Combining the knowledge of magic of the conquered tribe with his own clever planning, he gave his people greater comfort. He was proud that he had done so much good for them.



But Vijay was pained that they continued to worship their primitive gods. Instead of being grateful to Vijay, they went about thanking their gods.

Vijay wanted to change their attitude. He ordered all his subjects to assemble on a certain day. They started gathering in front of the palace right from dawn.

At the appointed time, Vijay appeared on the terrace of his palace. The people greeted him with loud cheers. Vijay addressed them in a solemn voice: "Dear brethren, I have a question to ask you. You are now happier than you were a few years ago. How has this change come about?"

"This is all due to the grace of our gods!" answered the crowd.

Vijay had expected that at least some people would say, "It is due to your leadership!" His face flushed in anger. He shouted, "How could you come to such a foolish conclusion?"

But before he could say anything further, they all heard the sound of a terrific explosion. Clouds of dense smoke rose from the peak of the mountain that stood behind the palace.

People ran helter-skelter in panic. Soon buildings and trees came tumbling down. It took some time for Vijay to realise that there had been an earthquake.

Vijay tried to organise relief operations for his people. But a new danger loomed large. A powerful neighbouring king, named Rawal, now marched in with a large army. Vijay summoned his people in order to resist the invasion. But they did not respond. They had come to the conclusion that Vijay had offended the gods. It was futile to help an accursed king!

When Vijay saw that all was lost for him, he rode away, narrowly escaping the enemy.

After several days, Vijay reached a kingdom named Indrapur. It was afternoon. In front of him lay a fine garden. He was about to enter when he was checked. "Our princess is having a stroll in the garden. You cannot enter now," said a guard.

Vijay was extremely tired. He lay down in the shadow of a tree near the gate.

A maid of the princess happened to see the young man sleeping. She informed the princess. On her instructions, her maids woke him up and let him into the garden.

"Who are you?" asked the princess.

"A few days ago, I should have felt proud to introduce myself. But now..." Vijay's voice faded away.

The clever princess understood that Vijay was no ordinary young man. She invited him to accompany her to the palace. Vijay, who was charmed by the sweet behaviour of the princess, could not refuse the invitation.

The King of Indrapur, who knew about the fall of Vijay's forest domain, could easily find out who his guest was. By and by, Vijay told his story to the princess and she developed a great sympathy for him. At last she confided to her father that she would like to marry Vijay.

The king was in a dilemma. He summoned his ministers and revealed Vijay's identity.

"My lord! Rawal is desperately searching for Vijay. He is a powerful king. If we surrender Vijay to him, he will be much pleased with us, and we will win a great friend," said one of the ministers.

“It is a sin to betray one’s guest,” observed another. “All we can do is politely ask Vijay to go away. It is not safe for us to give him shelter.”

“Gentlemen! I haven’t yet told you what the real problem is. My daughter has decided to marry Vijay,” disclosed the king.

There was pin-drop silence. Then the chief minister said: “My lord! From what I have heard about Vijay, I should congratulate our sweet princess for her choice. Though Vijay has run into bad days, he has not ceased to be a great man. We can take a bold stand against Rawal, who is now passing his time in merrymaking after his easy victory over Vijay’s domain. This is a good opportunity to attack Rawal’s kingdom. After Rawal is defeated and Vijay’s domain is restored to him, we can fulfil our princess’s wish.”

This proposal pleased all. The army was alerted. Vijay himself led the army against Rawal. A battle ensued. In an open duel Vijay killed Rawal.

Then, with the help of the King of Indrapur he reorganised his kingdom. His subjects, most of whom had left the kingdom, came back and greeted their king and pledged loyalty to him. Vijay accepted them without any reservation.

The marriage between Vijay and the princess of Indrapur became the most joyful event of the time. Rawal’s kingdom was merged into Vijay’s.

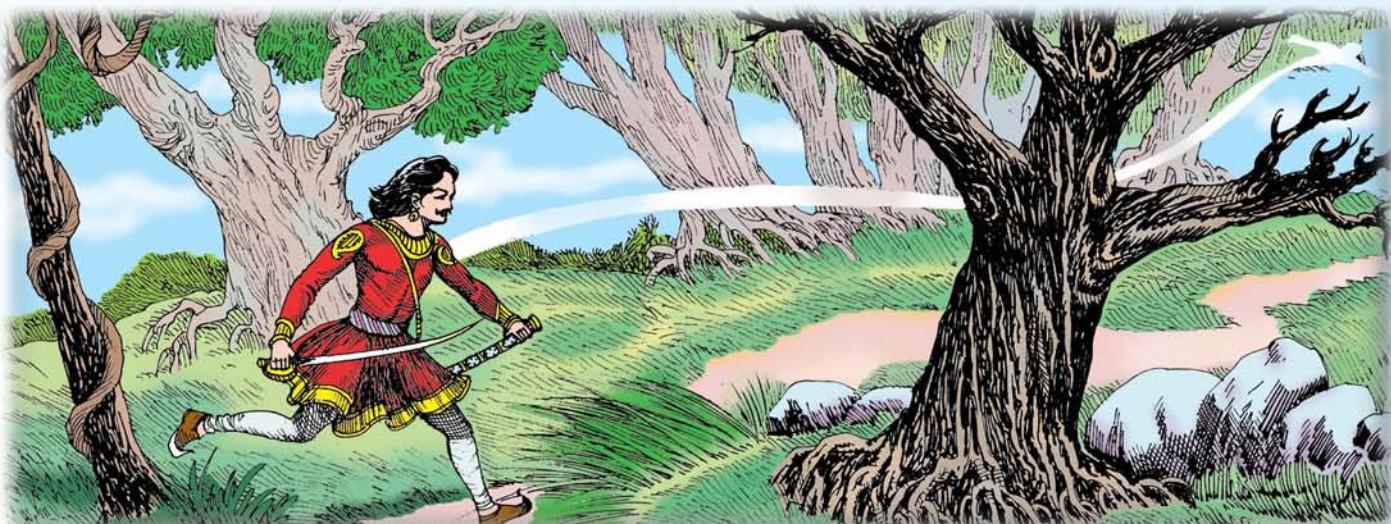
The vampire concluded the story here and challenged

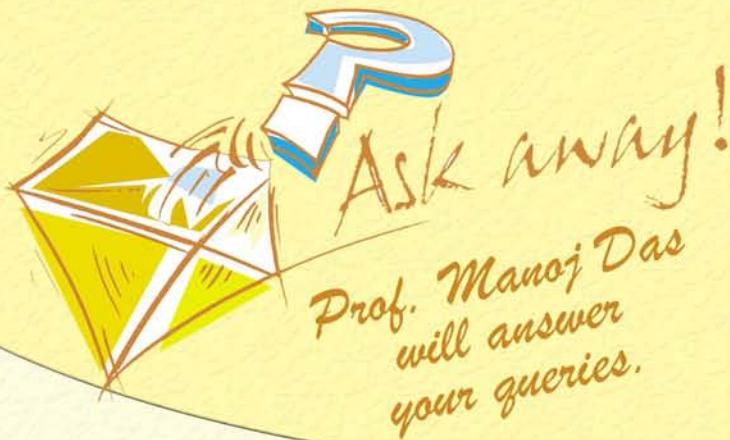
King Vikram: “O King, how is it that the people who had refused to fight for Vijay, came back and pledged their allegiance to him? How is it that Vijay did not take them to task for their past conduct? If you know the answers and still keep quiet, your head will be shattered to pieces.”

King Vikram had a ready answer: “The people thought Vijay was punished because he did not acknowledge his indebtedness to the gods. When they saw that he was victorious over a powerful king, they concluded that the gods had been kind to Vijay.

“But what is remarkable is Vijay’s conduct in not taking his people to task. Vijay, who had grown proud for a while, had turned humble. He realised that success depended on many factors, though one’s own efforts played a great part in it. First the earthquake that destroyed his achievements, then his unexpected meeting with the princess, her love which altered his destiny, all taught him a lesson. His pride vanished. Although his people had not changed, he had changed. His subjects’ faith in gods was mechanical and superstitious. But a faith in god’s grace, which Vijay himself had lately developed through experiences, was enlightened.”

As soon as the king finished answering him, the vampire gave him the slip. King Vikram went after him to the ancient tree again, with a grim determination to achieve his end.





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**Q** We have several schools in our country bearing the name of Dayananda. Can you kindly tell me something about him?

**- Ramakant Agarwal, Noida.**

**A** Swami Dayananda Saraswati was an outstanding personality of India of the 19th century. Born in the Saurashtra region of Gujarat in 1824, he was a great scholar on the Vedas and the Indian heritage. That was a time when many Indians had developed the habit of looking down upon Indian culture. To give the correct interpretation to the aspects of Indian culture and to check certain wrong influences that came from the West and misled the youth of India, became Swami Dayananda's mission. He rightly thought that his purpose can be served if there was a strong organisation behind him. Thus he founded what is known as the Arya Samaj in 1857. He was a courageous reformer who tried to remove superstitions and harmful

prejudices to which the society subscribed, often mistaking them to be religious rules. Caste system was one such degraded social practice. He fought against such conventions. He also preached against religious rituals associated with the worship of idols. That he did in order to set the mind of man free from dogmatic and imperfect concepts of God. He wished to revive the spirit of the Vedas that was above all kinds of sectarianism.

The Arya Samaj achieved impressive success in India, especially in Punjab and Uttar Pradesh. The Gurukul in Hardwar, an educational institution with a difference, tried to give shape to his teachings. Some leaders of the Arya Samaj, at a later stage, felt that English education as well as several of the contributions of the Western world should be combined with

the Vedic wisdom through a new programme of education. Thus came into being a chain of Anglo-Vedic schools.

Swami Dayananda died in 1883, on Diwali day.



India's national anthem, Jana-gana-mana, has only the first stanza of Tagore's poem. How many stanzas are there in the original song?

**(Answers for Independence Day quiz is on page 64)**



# Through the burning forest

**A**s Romi was about to mount his bicycle, he saw smoke rising from behind the distant line of trees.

"It looks like a forest fire," said Prem, his friend and classmate.

"It's well to the east," said Romi. "Nowhere near the road."

"But there's a strong wind," said Prem, looking at the dry leaves swirling across the road.

It was the middle of summer in northern India and it hadn't rained for several weeks. The grass was brown, the leaves of the trees were covered with dust. Though it was nearing 6 in the evening, the boys' shirts were damp with sweat.

"It'll be getting dark soon," said Prem. "You'd better spend the night at my house."

"No, I said I'd be home tonight. My father isn't keeping well. The doctor has given me some pills for him."

"You'd better hurry, then. That fire seems to be spreading." Prem alerted his friend.

"Oh, it's far off. It'll take me only forty minutes to ride through the forest. Bye, Prem! See you tomorrow!"

Romi mounted his bicycle and pedalled off down the main road of the village, scattering stray hens, stray dogs and stray villagers.

"Hey, look where you're going!" shouted an angry farmer, leaping out of the way of the on-coming bicycle. "Do you think you own the road?"

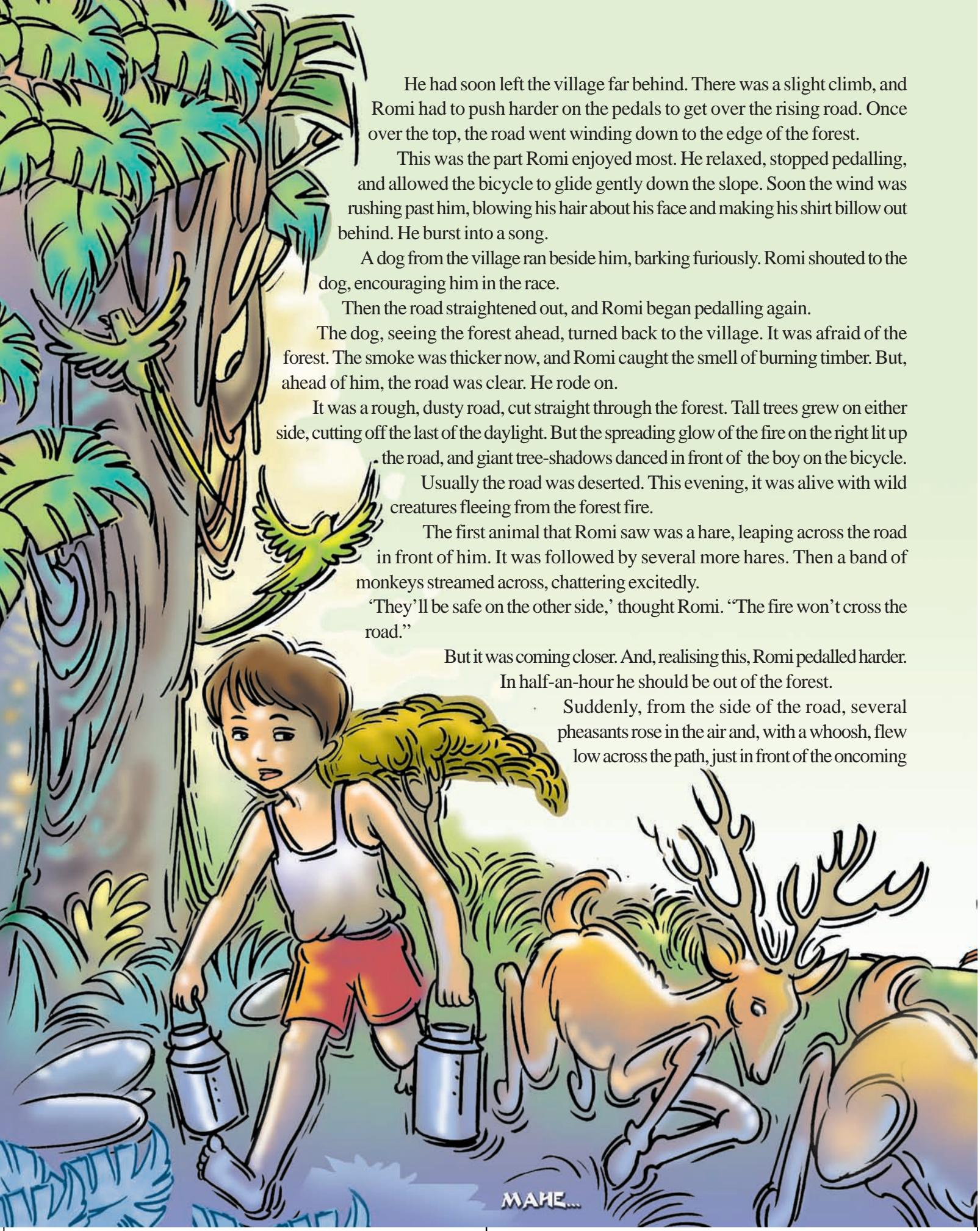
"Of course, I own it!" called Romi cheerfully, and cycled on. His own village lay about seven miles away, on the other side of the forest; but there was only a primary school in his village, and Romi was now at high school. His father, a fairly wealthy sugarcane farmer, had only recently bought him the bicycle. Romi didn't care too much for school and felt there weren't enough holidays; but he enjoyed the long rides, and he got on

well with his classmates. He might have stayed the night with Prem, had it not been for the pills which the *Vaid*, the village doctor, had given him for his father. Romi's father was suffering from backache, and the pills had been specially prepared from local herbs. Having been given such a fine bicycle, Romi felt that the least he could do in return was to get those pills to his father as fast as possible.

He put his head down and rode swiftly out of the village. Ahead of him, the smoke rose from the burning forest and the sky glowed red.

★ ★ ★





He had soon left the village far behind. There was a slight climb, and Romi had to push harder on the pedals to get over the rising road. Once over the top, the road went winding down to the edge of the forest.

This was the part Romi enjoyed most. He relaxed, stopped pedalling, and allowed the bicycle to glide gently down the slope. Soon the wind was rushing past him, blowing his hair about his face and making his shirt billow out behind. He burst into a song.

A dog from the village ran beside him, barking furiously. Romi shouted to the dog, encouraging him in the race.

Then the road straightened out, and Romi began pedalling again.

The dog, seeing the forest ahead, turned back to the village. It was afraid of the forest. The smoke was thicker now, and Romi caught the smell of burning timber. But, ahead of him, the road was clear. He rode on.

It was a rough, dusty road, cut straight through the forest. Tall trees grew on either side, cutting off the last of the daylight. But the spreading glow of the fire on the right lit up the road, and giant tree-shadows danced in front of the boy on the bicycle.

Usually the road was deserted. This evening, it was alive with wild creatures fleeing from the forest fire.

The first animal that Romi saw was a hare, leaping across the road in front of him. It was followed by several more hares. Then a band of monkeys streamed across, chattering excitedly.

‘They’ll be safe on the other side,’ thought Romi. ‘The fire won’t cross the road.’

But it was coming closer. And, realising this, Romi pedalled harder.

In half-an-hour he should be out of the forest.

Suddenly, from the side of the road, several pheasants rose in the air and, with a whoosh, flew low across the path, just in front of the oncoming

bicycle. Taken by surprise, Romi fell off. When he picked himself up and began brushing his clothes, he saw that his knee was bleeding. It wasn't a deep cut, but he allowed it to bleed a little, took out his handkerchief and bandaged his knee. He then mounted the bicycle again.

He rode a bit slower now, because birds and animals kept coming out of the bushes.

Not only pheasants but smaller birds, too, were streaming across the road—parrots, jungle crows, owls, magpies—and the air was filled with their cries.

"Everyone's on the move," thought Romi. "It must be a really big fire."

He could see the flames now, reaching out from behind the trees on his right, and he could hear the crackling as the dry leaves caught fire. The air was hot on his face. Leaves, still alight or turning to cinders, floated past.

A herd of deer crossed the road, and Romi had to stop until they had passed. He mounted again and rode on; but now, for the first time, he was feeling afraid.

★ ★ ★

From ahead came a faint clanging sound. It wasn't an animal sound, Romi was sure of that. A fire-engine? There were no fire-engines in the countryside.

The clanging came nearer, and Romi discovered that the noise came from a small boy who was running along the forest path, two milk-cans clattering at his side.

"Teju!" called Romi, recognising a friend from the neighbouring village. "What are you doing out here?"

"Trying to get home, of course," said Teju, panting

along beside the bicycle.

"Jump on," said Romi, stopping for him.

Teju was only eight or

nine—a couple of years younger than Romi. He had come to deliver milk to some road-workers, but they had left at the first sign of the fire, and Teju was hurrying home with his cans still full of milk.

He got up on the cross-bar of the bicycle, and Romi moved on again. He was quite used to carrying friends on the crossbar.

"Keep beating your milk-cans," said Romi. "If you do, the animals will know we are coming. My bell doesn't make enough noise. I'm going to get a *horn* for my cycle."

"I never knew there were so many animals in the middle of the road. I saw a python in the middle of the road. It stretched right across!"

"What did you do?"

"Just kept running and jumped right over it!"

Teju continued to chatter, but Romi's thoughts were on the fire, which was much closer now. Flames shot up from the dry grass and ran up the trunks of trees and along the branches. Smoke bellowed out above the forest.

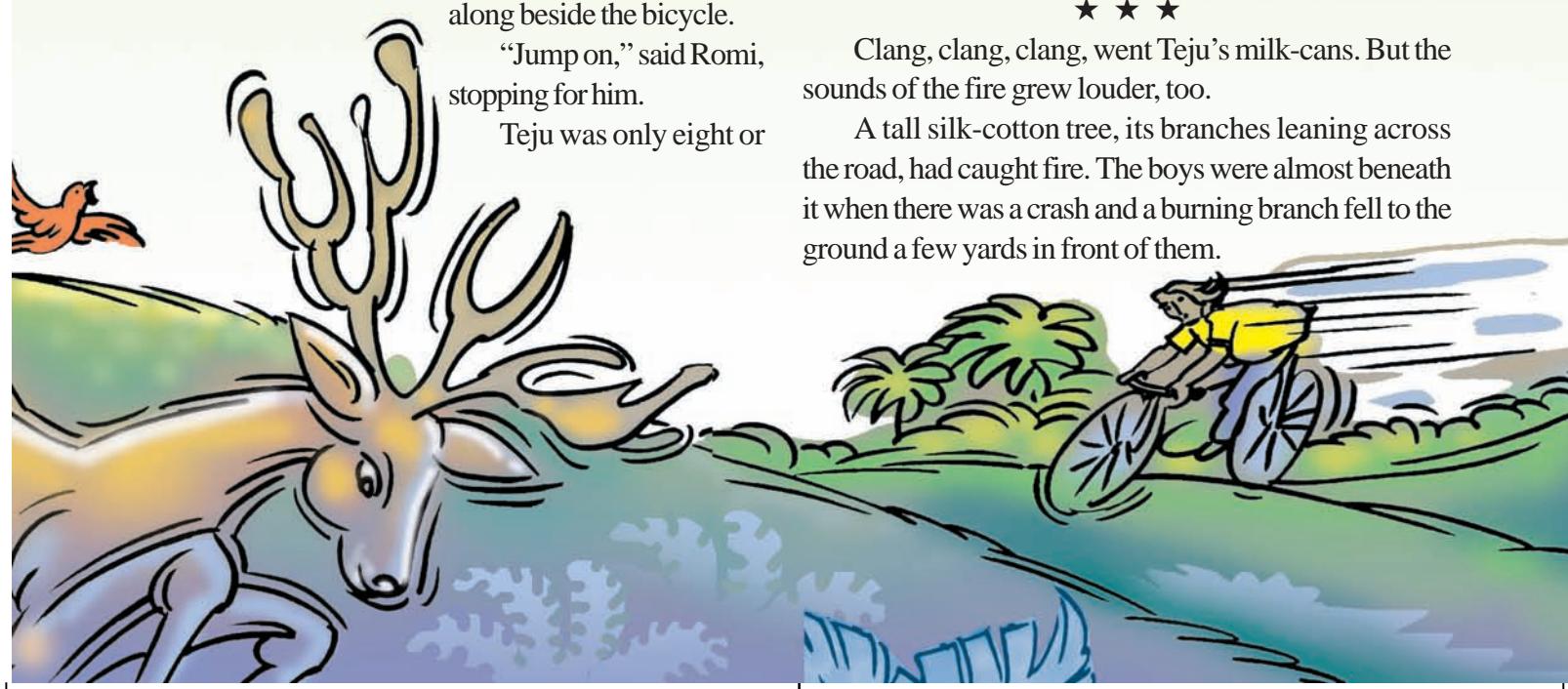
Romi's eyes were smarting, and his hair and eyebrows felt scorched. He was feeling tired, but he couldn't stop now, he had to get beyond the range of the fire. Another ten or fifteen minutes of steady riding would get them to the small wooden bridge that spanned the little river separating the forest from the sugarcane fields.

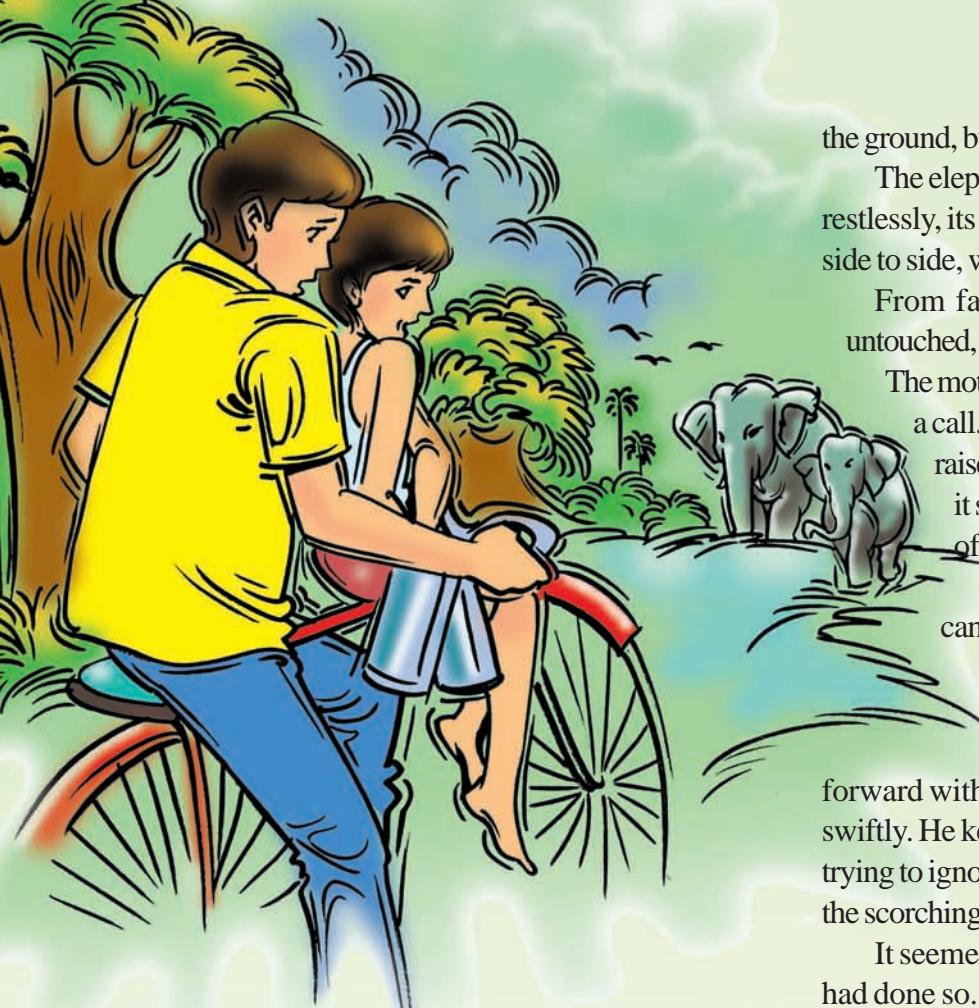
Once across the river, they would be safe. The fire could not touch them on the other side, because the forest ended at the river's edge. But could they get to the river in time?

★ ★ ★

Clang, clang, clang, went Teju's milk-cans. But the sounds of the fire grew louder, too.

A tall silk-cotton tree, its branches leaning across the road, had caught fire. The boys were almost beneath it when there was a crash and a burning branch fell to the ground a few yards in front of them.





The boys had to get off the bicycle and leave the road, forcing their way through a tangle of thorny bushes on the left, dragging the bicycle along and returning to the road some distance ahead of the burning tree.

“We won’t get out in time,” said Teju, back on the cross-bar but feeling disheartened.

“Yes, we will,” said Romi, pedalling with all his might. “The fire hasn’t crossed the road as yet.”

Even as he spoke, he saw a small flame leap up from the grass on the left.

It wouldn’t be long before more sparks and burning leaves were blown across the road to kindle the grass on the other side.

“Oh, look!” exclaimed Romi, bringing the bicycle to a sudden stop.

“What’s wrong now?” asked Teju, rubbing his sore eyes.

And then, through the smoke, he saw what was stopping them.

A young elephant was standing in the middle of the road. Teju slipped off the cross-bar, his cans rolling on

the ground, bursting open and spilling their contents.

The elephant was about 40 ft away. It moved about restlessly, its big ears flapping as it turned its head from side to side, wondering which way to go.

From far to the left, where the forest was still untouched, a herd of elephants moved towards the river.

The mother elephant raised her trunk and trumpeted a call. Hearing it, the young elephant on the road raised its own trunk and trumpeted a reply. Then it shambled off into the forest, in the direction of the herd, leaving the way clear.

“Come, Teju, jump on!” urged Romi. “We can’t stay here much longer!”

★ ★ ★

Teju forgot his milk-cans and pulled himself up on the cross-bar. Romi ran forward with the bicycle, to gain speed, and mounted swiftly. He kept as far as possible to the left of the road, trying to ignore the flames, the crackling, the smoke and the scorching heat.

It seemed that all the animals who could get away had done so. The exodus across the road had stopped.

“We won’t stop again,” said Romi, gritting his teeth. “Not even for an elephant!”

“We’re nearly there!” said Teju. He was perking up again, thinking of the big meal his mother and sister would have got ready for him.

A jackal, overcome by the heat and smoke, lay in the middle of the path, either dead or unconscious. Romi did not stop. He swerved round the animal, then put all his strength into one final effort.

He covered the last hundred yards at top speed, and then they were out of the forest, free-wheeling down the sloping road to the river.

“Look!” shouted Teju. “The bridge is on fire!”

Burning embers had floated down onto the small wooden bridge, and the dry, ancient timber had quickly caught fire. It was now burning fiercely.

Romi did not hesitate. He left the road, riding the bicycle over sand and pebbles. Then, with a rush, they went down the river-bank and into the water.

The next thing they knew, they were splashing around, trying to find each other in the darkness.

“Help!” cried Teju. “I’m drowning!”



“Don’t be silly,” said Romi. “The water isn’t deep—it’s only up to the knees. Come here and grab hold of me.”

Teju splashed across and grabbed Romi by the belt. “The water’s so cold,” he said, his teeth chattering.

“Do you want to go back and warm yourself?” asked Romi. “Some people are never satisfied. Come on, help me get the bicycle up. It’s down here, just where we are standing.”

Together, they managed to heave the bicycle out of the water and stand it upright.

“Now sit on it,” said Romi. “I’ll push you across.”

“We’ll be swept away,” said Teju.

“No, we won’t. There’s not much water in the river at this time of the year. But the current is quite strong in the middle, so sit still. All right?”

“All right,” said Teju nervously. Romi began guiding the bicycle across the river, one hand on the seat and one hand on the handlebar. The river was shallow and sluggish in midsummer, even so, it was quite swift in the middle. But having got safely out of the burning forest, Romi was in no mood to let a little river defeat him.

He kicked off his shoes, knowing they would be lost; and then, gripping the smooth stones of the river-bed with his toes, he concentrated on keeping his balance and getting the bicycle and Teju through the middle of the stream. The water here came up to his waist, and the current would have been too strong for Teju. But when they reached the shallows, Teju got down and helped Romi push the bicycle.

When they reached the opposite bank, they sank down on the grass.

“We can rest now,” said Romi. “But not all night—I’ve got some medicines to give my father.” He felt in his pockets and found that the pills, in their envelope, had turned to a soggy mess.

- Who was the president of the Constituent Assembly that held the ‘Independence Meeting’?

- Who was the Governor General of independent India?



“Oh well, he has to take them with water, anyway,” he said.

They watched the fire as it continued to spread through the forest. It had crossed the road down which they had come. The sky was now a bright red, and the river reflected the colour of the sky.

Several elephants had found their way down to the river. They were cooling off by spraying water on each other with their trunks. Further down-stream, there were deer and other animals.

Romi and Teju looked at each other in the glow from the fire. They hadn’t known each other very well before. But now they felt they had been friends for years.

“What are you thinking about?” asked Teju.

“I’m thinking,” said Romi, “that even if the fire is out in a day or two, it will be a long time before the bridge is repaired. So, I’m thinking it will be a nice, long holiday from school!”

“But you can walk across the river,” said Teju, “You just did it!”

“Impossible,” said Romi. “It’s much too swift.”



# Laugh till you drop!

The human race has one really effective weapon, and that is laughter.  
- Mark Twain



**Suresh:** What has fifty heads and fifty tails?

**Mahesh:** Fifty pennies.

ବିଜ୍ଞାନ



**Rita:** How does a chicken mail a letter to her friend ?

**Gita:** In a HEN-velope!

**Anand:** What has a big mouth but doesn't say a word?

**Varun:** A river.



ବିଜ୍ଞାନ



**Lata:** Where's a cow's favourite place to go?

**Aditya:** Where?

**Lata:** The moovies.

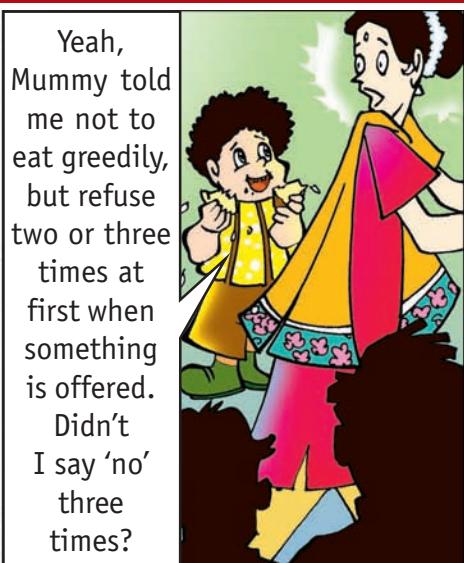
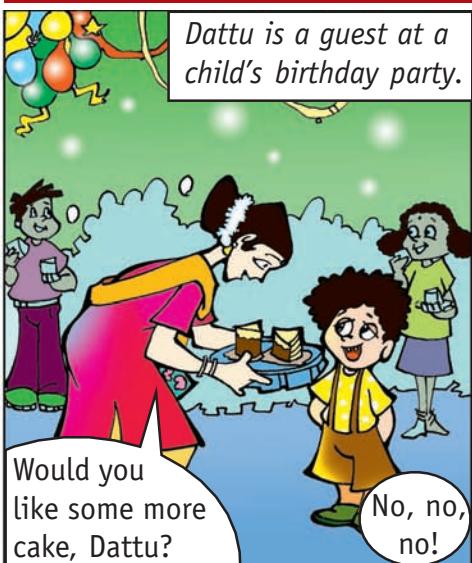
ବିଜ୍ଞାନ



**Sachin:** Why do hummingbirds hum ?

**Suraj:** Because they forgot the words!

## Dushtu Dattu





The festive occasion came only once a year. Artisans made an earthen image of Goddess Kali in the spacious hall of the landlord's large house. She was offered Puja amidst great pomp and show. Drummers and Shehnai Ustads played their instruments untiringly, and the priests went on chanting their hymns. Hundreds of men and women gathered in front of the hall where the rituals were performed. Invitees came from far and near, and the landlord, Choudhury, received them with warm smiles and embraces.

The most awful and sombre hour in the festivities came when a number of goats were sacrificed before the deity. Many would avoid the sight; some others would look horrified, but they would nevertheless experience the event. There were some who, of course, enjoyed it.

But so far as the most eagerly awaited enjoyment was concerned, that was shared by the landlord himself and his honoured guests. They feasted on the items prepared out of the meat of the sacrificed goats with great relish and in great quantity.

All this moved on smoothly - year after year. But one day, while preparations were afoot for the festival and the regular supplier of goats came to take orders,

Choudhury suddenly spoke out: "No sacrifice of goats this year nor for the years to follow!"

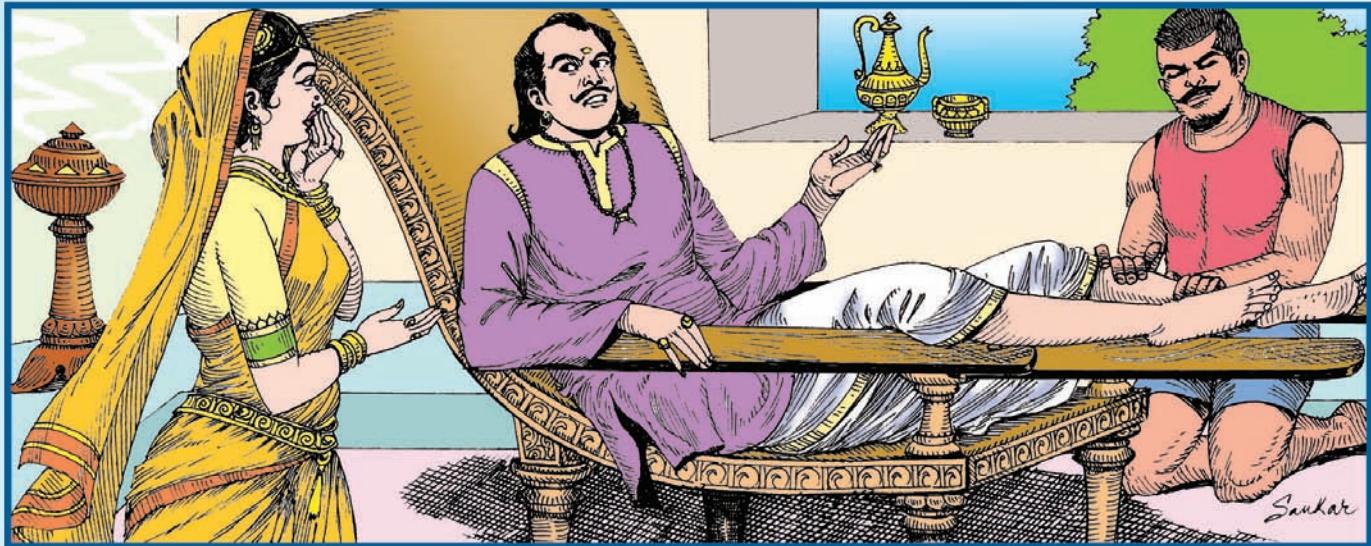
The landlord's friends and staff were stunned. How could the boss cry a halt to a hoary tradition? That was the only occasion when they could eat as much as they liked. What a pity that such an opportunity should all of a sudden!

Some of them met the landlord's wife. "Mother, you're kind and conscientious. The goddess visits us only once a year. Must we deprive Her of her favourite food? What would She think of us? What would She tell the other gods and goddesses once She is back in heaves?"

"To be frank, I do not like this animal sacrifice before the deity. It spoils the atmosphere of devotion. Shouldn't we be happy with my husband's devotion? His change of heart augurs well, I suppose! He does not like bloodshed any longer," said Chowdhurani, the landlord's wife.

But those who went in a delegation to her were clever people. They persuaded her to appeal to her husband to continue the tradition.

In the evening, while Chowdhury relaxed in an easy chair and his servant massaged his legs, Chowdhurani stood beside him and hemmed and hawed and said, "It's



about the Puja festival. As you know, people look upon the sacrifice of goats as a very important part of the rituals. Sensible friends of yours say that the goddess also likes it."

Chowdhury stood up, looking quite agitated. "Sensible friends! You call them sensible? And must you, too, be inhuman like them?" he shouted, almost on the verge of tears.

Chowdhurani was taken aback. At the same time she was also happy that her husband was growing inclined towards non-violence that he had realised animal sacrifice is inhuman.

"Please do not misunderstand me. I am not inhuman."

"No? Not inhuman towards me? You must be observing that nowadays I can eat only fish and not meat. By last year I had already lost half of my teeth. However, I managed to chew the meat during the festival with great difficulty. Meanwhile I've lost all my teeth. Now I can't chew meat at all. In other words while our guests all around me will go on feasting on the meat, I will sit content with vegetarian dishes. And that is what you wish to happen. Isn't that being inhuman towards me?"

Chowdhurani understood the meaning of her husband's non-violence. She kept quiet. - *Visvavasu*

## That's science for you

Ur, said to be the home of Abraham, was the capital of the Sumerian kingdom from 2800 to 2300 BC. Ur was the site of many great monuments.

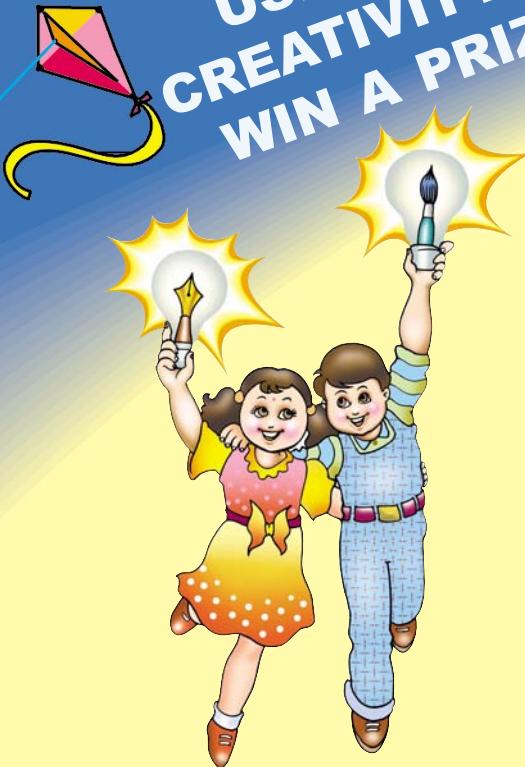
Prominent among them were the ziggurats or temples—a vast, stepped pyramidal structure built in successive stages. It had a shrine at the top of the structure. The approach to the temple

from the ground was through huge, broad staircases for the moon goddess Nanna or Sin, which covered an area 64 by 46 metres and was 12 metres high.

Three of its sides had sheer walls and three great staircases, each with a hundred steps. These steps converged at one stage. Another single staircase led to the next stage. The building clearly shows that by the third millennium, Sumerians were familiar with all the basic forms of architecture.



USE YOUR  
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An invitation to children to contribute to the

## CHILDREN'S SPECIAL

(November 2003 issue)

**For young writers :** Send us your original stories, up to 500 words, with a catchy title. Entries may be in English, Hindi, Bengali, Oriya, Marathi, Gujarati, Telugu, Kannada, Tamil or Malayalam. You may send up to three entries. Selected entries will be published in the Children's Special issue, November 2003, in all twelve language editions.

**For young artists :** Up to three drawings/paintings based on a well-known incident in Indian mythology/history (to be explained in writing). Selected artists will be invited to Chennai (travel expenses paid) to illustrate the stories/items chosen for the Special Number.

**Closing date : August 31, 2003**

### Attractive prizes up for grabs!

**Photo :** Please attach a passport size photo along with your entry.

(Please detach the coupon below, fill in the details and attach it to your entries.

Send your entries to **Children's Special Contest, Chandamama India Limited,**  
82, Defence Officers Colony, Ekkatuthangal, Chennai - 600 097. or e-mail to [chandamama@vsnl.com](mailto:chandamama@vsnl.com))

Name : ..... Age/Date of Birth : .....

Class : ..... School : .....

Home address : .....

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Description of entries :-

1. ....
2. ....
3. ....

I hereby certify that the entries mentioned above are the original, unaided work of my son/daughter. I hereby agree to *Chandamama* holding full copyright on the selected entry and using it in the print and electronic media and in any language.

*Signature of Participant*

*Signature of Parent*



*Tucked away in the northeastern corner of India is the mountain state of Sikkim. It is virtually on the foothills of the Himalayas, overshadowed by Mount Kanchenjunga (8,598 m), the world's third highest peak.*

*The State, being an integral part of the inner ranges of the Himalayas, has varied elevation ranging from 300 to 8,585 m above sea level and only a small per cent of the total area of the State is habitable.*

*The State spans over 7,096 sq. km. The total population is 540,493. Sikkim is bordered by Tibet in the north, Bhutan in the east, Nepal in the west, and West Bengal to the south.*

*The Kanchenjunga is known as Khangchendzonga in Sikkim, and the people worship the peak. They believe it to be the guardian deity of their land. A number of glaciers descend from the snow-clad mountains into the State.*

*The Teesta is the main river. Sikkim became a State of India on April 26, 1975 with its capital at Gangtok. Until then, the ruler was known as the Chogyal. English is the official language, while Nepalese, Hindi, Sikkimese, and Lepcha are also spoken.*

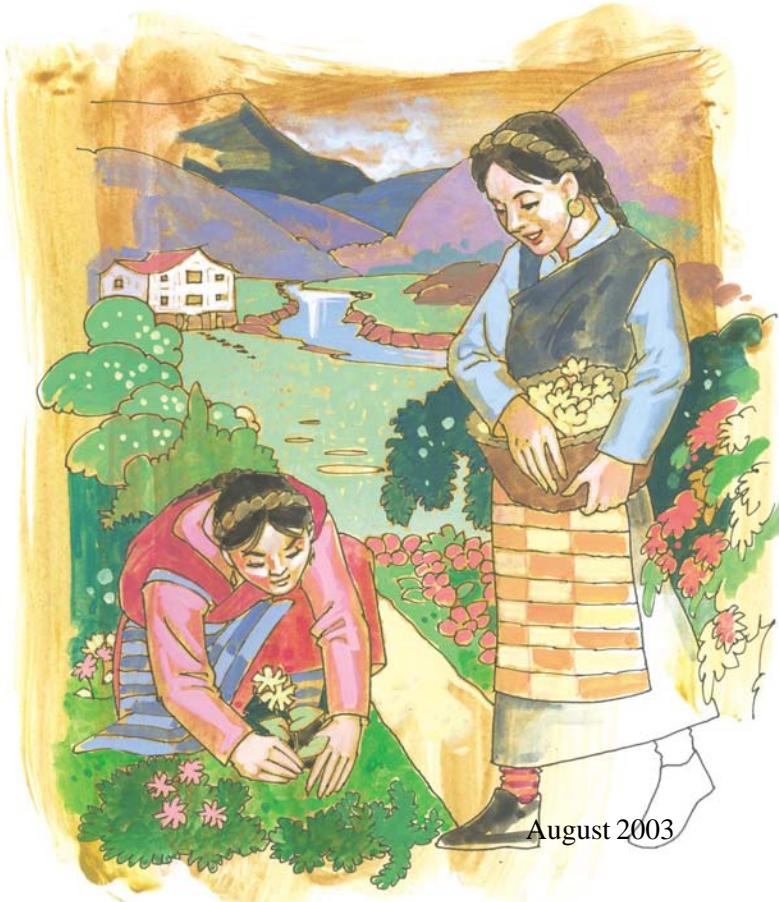
*Sikkim is abundant in rare plants, orchids, and birds.*

## The witch and the beautiful girls

**N**estled in a beautiful valley at the foot of a hill were a lovely garden and a small cottage in which two beautiful girls, Komtarhap and Jarkharhap, lived. Komtarhap's voice was so sweet that flowers blossomed whenever she sang. When the younger sister Jarkharhap danced to the rhythm of music, even wild animals like *sangi*, *suna*, and *su-chayak* would dance with her.

The garden belonged to God Rumu. The sisters took care of the garden, which was the home for some very beautiful and rare flowers. They protected the garden from evil hands, especially Taingap, the witch of Lyangbar. The witch was in the habit of appearing in dreams, before she attacked the ones who had had the dreams. She lived in the root of a tree in the jungle of Lyangbar. She possessed powers to assume any form and no one could resist her spell.

One day, Jarkharhap had a peculiar dream. She dreamt of Taingap the witch snatching her sister's golden pillow.



She woke up with a scream. Komtarhap heard her sister's scream, and she also woke up. They were both sad. They knew that it was just a matter of time before Taingap attacked them.

"The witch is going to attack us one of these days. We must do something to protect ourselves," said Komtarhap.

As the girls sat down to work out a plan of action, they saw a beautiful young girl, roaming in the garden.

"Who could that be? I hope she is not Taingap in disguise," said a frightened Komtarhap.

The younger sister immediately picked her golden pillow. "I've no dout. This is Taingap. Look at the way she is coming straight to us," she said hugging her pillow tightly.

Taingap came directly to them and sat besides them and said, "I've never seen such beautiful girls. It is no surprise that the *punu* of Lyangbar has fallen in love with your beauty. He wants to marry you. I've come to take you both there. If you get ready quickly, we can be there before evening."

"We're happy here. We've no ambitions to become queens. We've no qualities to become one, too. Kindly leave us alone," said Komtarhap.

This made Taingap angry. She had an ulterior motive. She found that her plan was going awry. She threatened the girls. "This is a *punu*'s order and you cannot defy it. Get ready and come with me to Lyangbar! Don't force me to drag you to the palace."

The sisters were frightened. It reinforced their suspicion that the young girl was the witch. Komtarhap



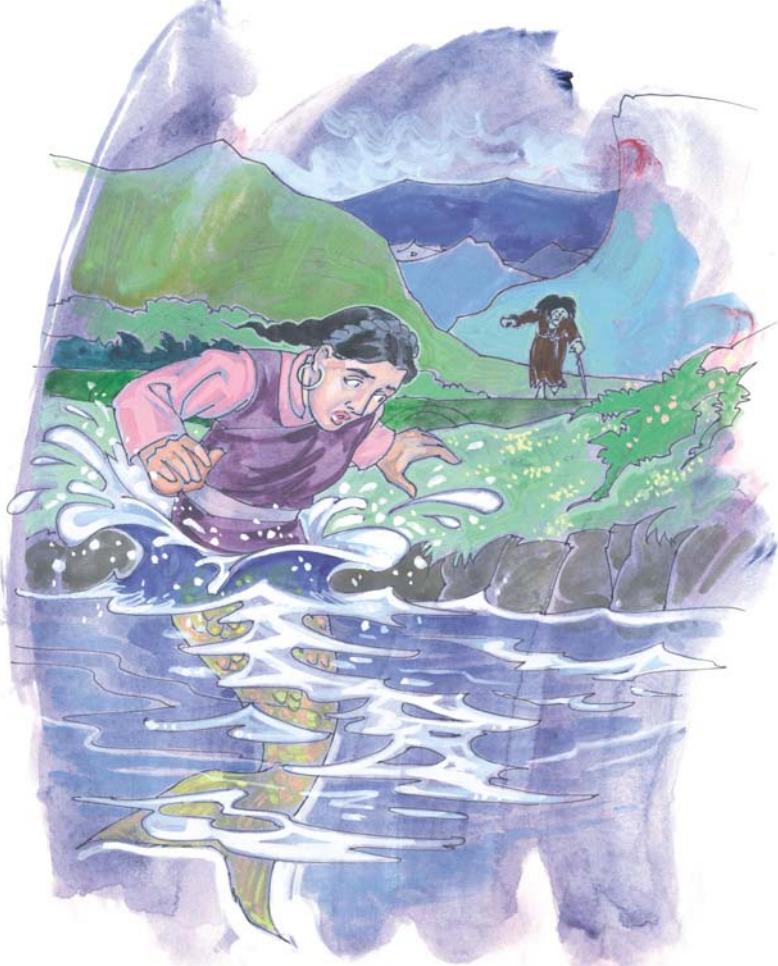
tried to pacify her. "Don't get angry. You must be hungry; have something to eat." She then offered the young girl a whole pan of Zo and roasted meat. The young girl ate it and demanded for more. They gave her whatever they had in the kitchen. She consumed it all. The sisters were now convinced that the young girl was none other than Taingap the witch.

After she had eaten, Taingap again persuaded the sisters to accompany her. Komtarhap tried to buy some more time. She said, "I've some work to do. I shall go with you after I complete ploughing the field and sowing the seeds."

## The people of the land

Sikkim is a place where people of various communities intermingle and live in peace, each following their own customs and tradition. The Lepchas are believed to be the original inhabitants. Many centuries ago, before the advent of Buddhism and Christianity, they worshipped the mountains, rivers, and forest and lived harmoniously in their natural surroundings. The Bhutias originally came from Tibet and migrated to Sikkim in the 15<sup>th</sup> century. The Nepalese are another dominant community. They migrated to Sikkim much after the Lepchas and the Bhutias. They introduced what is known as terrace cultivation. The Nepalese language is understood and spoken all over the state.





“Don’t worry about that. I shall do it for you in no time. Meanwhile, get ready to go to the palace,” said the witch. She then chanted some magic words and waved her hand. Wonder of wonders, the whole field was ploughed and all the seeds sown! She then ordered the sisters to get ready.

Jarkharhap interceded, “But I’ve to thrash the rice and weave the cloth. I’ll finish it and then go with you.”

The witch with the help of her magic did all that work also in no time. Now the sisters had no excuse, but to accompany her.

After travelling for some time, they reached the valley. From there, they could see the palace. The sisters were quite relieved on seeing it. “We’re near the palace, no harm will come to us. Perhaps she is the *punu*’s messenger,” said Jarkharhap to her sister.

But the sisters were wrong. The witch stopped at some distance from the palace. She went to the river and said, “Come refresh yourself before you meet the *punu*.” When Komtarhap cupped her hands in the water to wash her face, Taingap uttered some verse and changed her into a *Ngoor* and threw her into the river.

Jarkharhap saw all this and trembled in fear. She tried to run away, but Taingap caught her immediately. Taingap then told Jarkharhap, “Don’t worry, I’ll not harm you if you obey me.” She then transformed herself to look like Komtarhap. “Don’t I look like your sister?” she teased Jarkharhap. Jarkharhap was stunned. Taingap looked just like her sister!

The two proceeded to the *punu*’s palace. The witch introduced herself as Komtarhap and Jarkharhap as her servant. The *punu*, bewitched by her beauty, immediately married her. They lived in the palace amidst all royal comfort. Jarkharhap was forced to do all the household chores from morning to night.

Jarkharhap also took out the *punu*’s goats to graze in the meadows in the afternoon. Every evening, Taingap, on the pretext of counting the animals, devoured two or three goats to satiate her huge appetite. This went on for many days.

One day, when Jarkharhap was tending to the goats on the banks of the river, she thought of her sister. She

## Buddhist Monasteries

Sikkim is full of monasteries. There are more than 200 monasteries in the State. These are a part of the lifestyle of the people and has been a major influence on their cultural heritage. These monasteries or *gompas* are an integral part of Sikkim; most of them belong to the Nyingmapa or the Kargyupa sect.

Pemayangtse monastery - the State’s second oldest monastery, was built in 1705. The monastery is a three-storeyed structure filled with wall paintings and sculptures including a seven-tiered painted wooden model of the abode of Guru Rimpoche, complete with rainbows, angels, and the whole panoply of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, on the third floor. Called *Sangthokpalri* (heaven), this masterpiece of intricate wood-carving was done single-handedly, over a period of five years, by the late monk Dungzin Rimpoche.



sat on a rock on the river bank and started speaking to her sister. She narrated her daily ordeal. She then began to weep for her elder sister.

Suddenly, she heard someone answering her from the river. It was a fish. Jarkharhap realised that it was her sister.

Unexpectedly, she assumed her original form. The sisters spoke in great length. Komtarhap was under the witch's spell. She was living under the water as a fish. She comes out of it for just an hour every day. They both decided to meet every day and chat.

Jarkharhap became very happy knowing that her sister was alive and safe. After that, they met daily. There was a marked difference in her attitude. She now did all her work cheerfully.

Taingap, too, noticed the change. 'She is very chirpy. I've a feeling she has met with her sister. That is the only thing that will make her happy. I'll find out tomorrow,' she thought.

The next day, Taingap stopped Jarkharhap from going to the meadow. Instead, she herself took the goats for grazing.

Taingap went to the forest. There she saw Komtarhap eagerly waiting for her sister. Before Taingap could catch hold of her, Komtarhap managed to jump into the river and became a fish again.

Dejected, Taingap returned to the palace. Meanwhile, Jarkharhap was worried about her sister's safety. She prayed to god to save her from the witch. Jarkharhap then began weeping inconsolably.

In the afternoon, the *punu* came to meet his queen. There he saw Jarkharhap weeping. He had earlier noticed her forlorn look and assumed that she had some problem. Now, he urged her to confide in him.

Jarkharhap then narrated her story and how the witch had transformed her sister into a fish.

"What? This is unbelievable! Are you telling me the truth?" the *punu* demanded.

"If you don't believe me, then hide yourself in the sheep shed at night. You'll find her devouring a few of them. That's why the number of sheep has come down drastically."

That night, the *punu* hid himself in the shed. He was

## Glossary

<b>Zo</b>	: rice	<b>Sangi</b>	: lion
<b>Punu</b>	: king	<b>Suna</b>	: bear
<b>Ngoo</b>	: fish	<b>Su-chayak</b>	: leopard

surprised to find his queen come there at midnight. She then assumed her true form and ate three full goats. The *punu* was frightened seeing her devour three goats at a time. He returned to the palace silently.

The next day, he ordered a new room to be built, near the palace. He decorated it with finery. He had dug a pit under the bed. He asked his servants to fill it with sharp edged weapons.

He went to the witch and said, "I have constructed a new room, just for you. Come and take a look at it." The unsuspecting witch also went along with the *punu*. She was thrilled with all the finery.

She went to sit on the bed. As soon as she sat on it, the bed collapsed and she fell into the pit. The sharp weapons inside cut her into pieces.

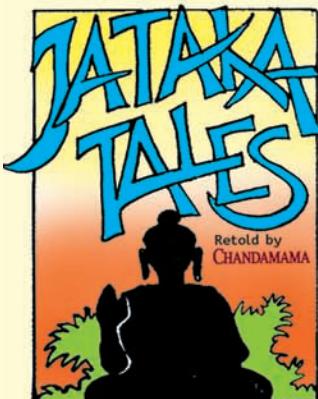
The *punu* and Jarkharhap went to the riverbank. There they saw Komtarhap waiting for them. The curse was lifted with the death of the witch. The *punu* now married the original Komtarhap. The sisters lived happily for ever in the palace.

*-Retold by Vidhya Raj*



# Jataka Tales

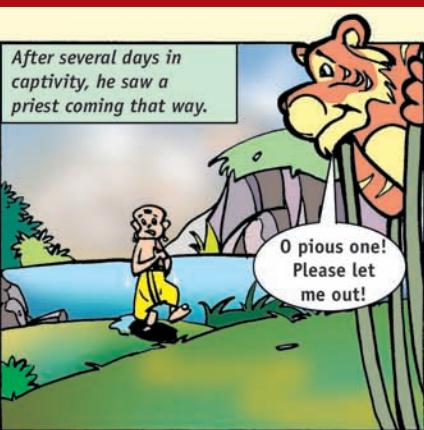
# Cheats never prosper



Once, a tiger got trapped in a cage. However hard he tried, he could not get out of it.



After several days in captivity, he saw a priest coming that way.



The priest hesitated to let the fierce tiger out.

I won't. You'll eat me up if I let you out.

No! I shall not. I promise to be your slave if you let me out. It is hell being inside this cage.

Taking pity on the tiger, the priest let him out.



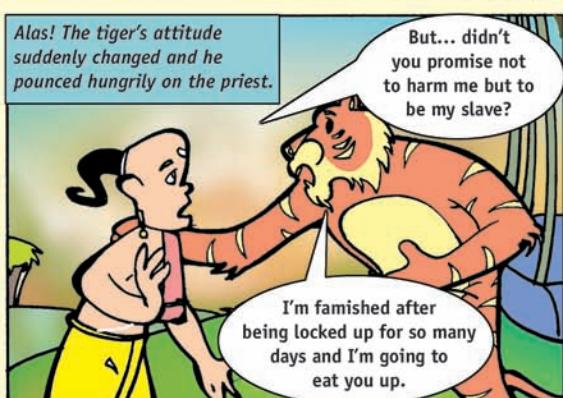
Alas! The tiger's attitude suddenly changed and he pounced hungrily on the priest.

But... didn't you promise not to harm me but to be my slave?

I'm famished after being locked up for so many days and I'm going to eat you up.

All right, ask any three creatures to judge the situation. I shall let you free if even one of them supports you. But if not, I shall make you my meal.

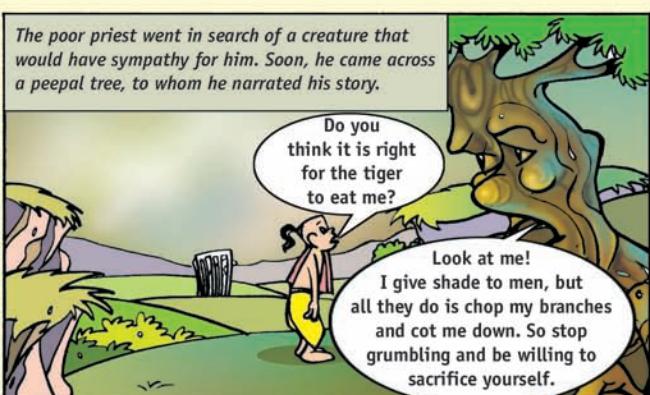
Is this my reward for setting you free? Give me a chance!



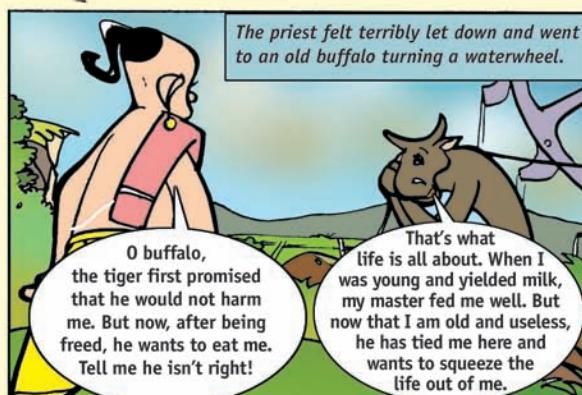
The poor priest went in search of a creature that would have sympathy for him. Soon, he came across a peepal tree, to whom he narrated his story.

Do you think it is right for the tiger to eat me?

Look at me! I give shade to men, but all they do is chop my branches and cut me down. So stop grumbling and be willing to sacrifice yourself.



The priest felt terribly let down and went to an old buffalo turning a waterwheel.





# SAVE WATER

**Water is the elixir of life, which has not been used with the necessary care and everyone takes it for granted. It is predicted that by the year 2025, the earth's water supply will decrease by 50 per cent. We cannot increase its store of fresh water: all we can do is, change the way it uses it. Given below are some facts and figures on water and water conservation tips.**

## Water Facts

 Less than 2 per cent of the earth's water supply is fresh water.

 Unsafe drinking water leads to water-borne diseases that kills a child every eight seconds. It is essential that we do not let pollutants affect our drinking water.

 A leaky tap can waste nearly 380 litres a day.

 Between 10 and 30 litres of fresh water is flushed down a normal toilet.

 Taking a shower or bath is one of the largest uses of water, domestically. An average 10 minute bath uses up about 180 to 250 litres of water.

 A single washing machine load uses 100 to 150 litres.

 You use about 20 litres of water if you leave the water running while brushing your teeth.

 One litre of waste water pollutes about eight litres of fresh water.

 Fifty litres is the recommended basic domestic water requirement for a family of four.

 Each person needs to drink about 10 cups of water every day.



## How to conserve water

**Don't let it run.** We have all developed the bad habit of letting the tap run while we brush our teeth. Keeping a mug of water while we brush our teeth can save several litres of water each day!

**Fix the drip.** There is nothing like a 'little' drip. Every drip amounts to nearly 35 litres of water wasted down the drain every day. You can prevent this if you replace worn out washers and valves.

**Close the hose.** Using the garden hose to water the lawn or washing the car wastes about 2,000 litres of water. Try to use a water sprinkler or use grey water (water that has been used to wash vegetables or wash hands) in your garden.



Run your washing machines only when it has a full load.

Don't empty water down the drain. Use it to water a plant or garden, or for cleaning.

Avoid flushing the toilet unnecessarily.

Dispose of tissues, leftover food, and other similar waste in the trash bin rather than the toilet.

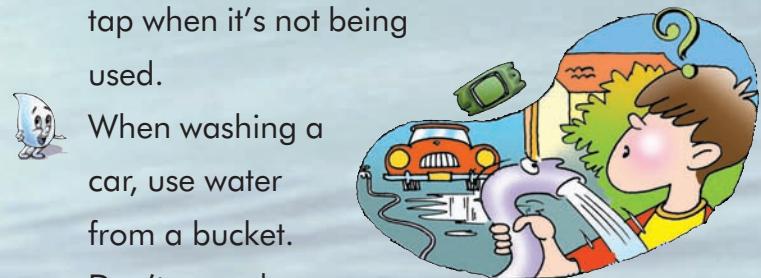
When washing dishes by hand, fill one

sink or basin with soapy water. Quickly rinse under a slow-moving stream from the tap.

Use a bowl of water to clean fruits and vegetables rather than under running water. You can reuse this water for your garden. Get the habit of turning off the tap when it's not being used.

When washing a car, use water from a bucket.

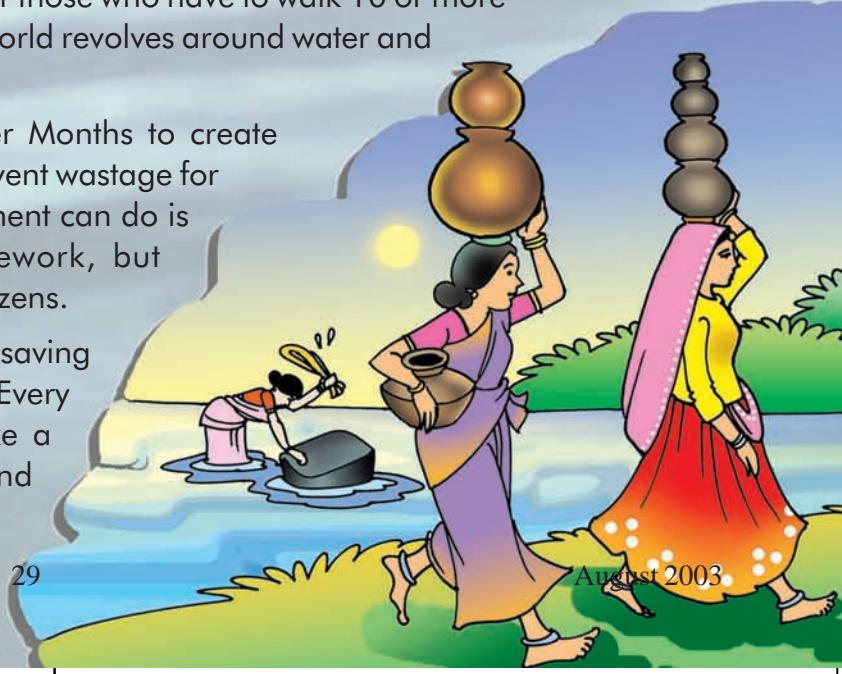
Don't use a hose.



The world is not a shrinking place for some. For those who have to walk 10 or more km a day to fetch a pot of drinking water, the world revolves around water and nothing else.

India is observing July and August as Water Months to create awareness on ways to conserve water and prevent wastage for sustainable development. The best a government can do is to provide the legal and economic framework, but conservation and recycling depends on we citizens.

Try to do one thing each day that will result in a saving of water. Don't worry if the saving is minimal. Every drop counts. And every one of us can make a difference. So tell your parents, friends, and neighbours to "Turn it off" and Keep it off".



# The Sun Worshippers

*During the time known as the 'Middle Ages', the most popular stories and legends belonged to the Ramayana and the Mahabharata, the Puranas and the Bhagavatas. Around this time, another class of legends also became popular in Eastern India. They were known as Mangal Kavya. Written in the spoken language of the common man, they tell us about the society and lifestyle of the times. There are several versions of the following story.*

**O**nce upon a time, there lived a poor man who had two daughters, Rumna and Jhumna. Their mother had died when they were little girls and they had a stepmother who hated them, although she had no children of her own.

Rumna and Jhumna worked all day long, attending to all the chores in the house and helping their father look after the few cattle owned by them. One day, the stepmother told them that there was nothing to eat at home. If they wanted a meal, they should go into the forest and get some wild herbs and fruits.

Rumna and Jhumna knew that there was no use arguing with her, so they left quietly, taking a basket with them. Jhumna, the younger one, was crying because she was really hungry.

“Don’t cry, Jhumna dear,” said Rumna trying to comfort her. “I’m sure we’ll find some nice juicy fruits in the forest and you can have as many as you want.”

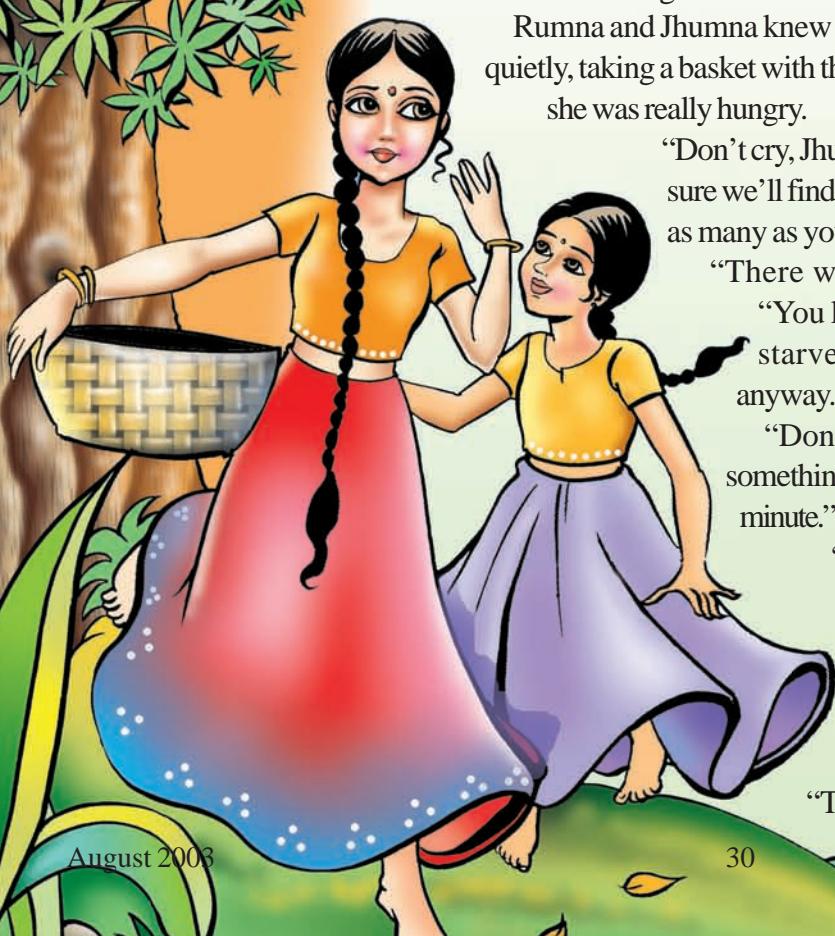
“There won’t be any fruits this season,” said Jhumna. “You know that as well as I do. I know well that we’ll starve to death. That’s what our new mother wants, anyway.”

“Don’t say that,” said Rumna, “we’re sure to find something. Come, walk faster, the sun is getting hotter by the minute.”

“If only the sun could help us!” sighed Jhumna.

As the sisters walked deeper and deeper into the forest, the sunlight grew dim. There were huge trees standing close together that made the place seem quite dark.

“Let’s go back,” said Jhumna with a shiver. “There isn’t any fruit or berry to be found, and I feel



afraid in this dim light. What if wild animals come and attack us?"

Rumna thought the same. "Very well," she said looking about her. "Do you remember which fork we had taken while coming? The left or the right?" Jhumna couldn't remember either. They soon discovered that they had lost their way and ended up getting deeper and deeper into the forest.

Suddenly they saw a beam of light ahead. "That must be the way out of the forest," said Rumna eagerly. "Come, let's go there."

They walked towards the light and soon found themselves beside a beautiful garden with a pond on one side. A group of beautiful girls sat in a ring worshipping.

"They must be *devakanyas* or damsels from heaven," whispered Rumna. "Look at their rainbow-coloured wings! They are worshipping the sun. I had heard they do it this time of the year. Shhh .. we mustn't disturb them."

The sisters hid quietly in the shade watching the damsels worshipping the sun. After the rituals were complete, the damsels flew away. Rumna now had a bright idea. "Come, Jhumna, let us also worship the sun. Perhaps he'll listen to our prayers."

"But we don't know how," said Jhumna.

"We've just watched how they did it, didn't we? Let's do the same," said Rumna.

So Rumna and Jhumna gathered wild flowers and made a pitcher out of mud just as they had seen the *devakanyas* do. Then they took a dip in the pond and worshipped the sun.

"My Lord, Sun, the giver of light and life, we offer you our homage. Please accept it and give us your blessings!" said Rumna.

"Lord Sun, please take away our problems and let us be happy," said Jhumna.

A bright ray of light fell on their pitcher but nothing else happened. But when they stood up, they suddenly found their way home. What's more, the road that had seemed so long in the morning seemed a short one now.

A big surprise awaited them when they reached home. Their poor hut had vanished. In its place stood a lovely cottage with a garden, complete with a pond and

grazing ground for the cattle. The house was full of beautiful things and everything one could wish for!

Rumna and Jhumna were delighted and knew that it was the sun who had blessed them with all this prosperity. Their father was delighted, too. But their stepmother was very jealous and made a plan to get rid of them. She begged her husband to take them away to the forest and leave them there. "Now that we're so rich and have everything we want, I don't want them here," she said. She made life so miserable for the poor man that he gave in finally.

"Rumna and Jhumna, get ready early morning. I shall take you to your aunt's place."

"We never knew we had an aunt, father!" said Rumna.

"You never told us about her before," cried Jhumna.

"Didn't I? Oh well, I must have forgotten," said their father with a stammer.

The girls were up and ready early in the morning.

"Jhumna, don't forget to carry the pitcher with which we worship the sun," said Rumna. "We must carry on worshipping him wherever we are, since he has been so



good and kind to us." Their father took them deep inside the forest.

"How much longer is it?" asked Jhumna who was very tired.

"I'm so thirsty," said Rumna, "there doesn't seem to be any water in sight."

"Wait under this tree while I get some water for you," said their father.

The girls were so tired, they soon fell asleep. Their father left them there and rushed back home.

When Rumna woke up, it was terribly dark and their father was nowhere in sight.

"Wake up, Jhumna," she said shaking her sister.

"What's happening? Where's father? Has he left us alone and gone back home?"

"Looks like it," said Rumna with a shiver. "This forest is full of wild beasts. I hope they won't attack us in the night."

"Let's worship the good sun once again," said Jhumna.

"Yes," said Rumna, "I'm sure he will protect us."

The sisters placed the sacred pitcher before them and prayed that the sun might protect them and look after

them, now that they were totally on their own. Soon after, they saw a little house atop a tree and a ladder leading there. The sisters climbed up and found themselves in a cosy shelter with food and clothes and even a bed to sleep in.

"It is the sun looking after us once again," said Jhumna.

"The sun never fails those who pray to him sincerely and have total faith in him," said Rumna. "I'm not afraid any more. I can feel something good will happen to us!"

And she was right! A prince who had come hunting in the forest with his friend, the minister's son, found them in the morning and took them to the palace in their chariot. The king and queen were so charmed by their beauty that they got Rumna married to the prince and Jhumna to his friend. And so the sisters lived happily ever after.

Can you guess what happened to their father? As soon as he reached home after leaving his daughters in the forest, he found himself in his old broken shack with no trace of the riches that the sun had brought them. Everything had vanished the moment Rumna and Jhumna walked out with the pitcher they had made for worshipping the sun!

- Swapna Dutta



## Rita's craze for exercise

Rita was calling on her new neighbour, Mona, a young college-going teenager. Mona was a fitness freak. Rita watched her do aerobics.

"Didi, why are you doing all this?" asked Rita.

Mona replied, "I had become very plump and the doctor advised me to exercise daily. It is very good for our health."

Rita was impressed by her reply and the way Didi was exercising. She decided to start exercising regularly.

The next morning, Rita started to exercise rigorously. While working out, Rita lifted her hands, and the flower vase fell 'thump'! But this did not deter her. She continued her exercises. Then fell a beautiful ceramic piece. Rita's mother asked, "What are you doing, Rita?"

"Can't you see, ma? I'm exercising. It is very good for health. Mona Didi does this twice a day. My teacher has also advised us to keep ourselves fit."

Her mother was not convinced by her reply, "But, you are fit, Rita!"

"No, mummy, this morning when I woke up, I saw that I was developing a pot-belly!"

## **PRESENCE OF MIND**

The ability to think calmly and to act promptly is called 'presence of mind'. Persons with presence of mind are of great help, not only in times of danger, but during famine, flood, and even war.

Here is an example of a smart boy whose example should encourage all youngsters to develop this ability:

In a big garden in Allahabad, some boys were playing with a bat and a ball. One of the boys swung the bat and hit the ball with all his strength. The ball bounced and fell into the hollow of a banyan tree. Each one of the boys tried to take out the ball, but all failed because their hands could not reach the bottom of the dry trunk. They then began finding fault with the player who had hit the ball so hard.

Just then, a smart lad, who was walking about in the garden, came to the group of players, who told him all that had happened. "Don't worry, I shall get the ball out for you. Just get me a bucket of water," said he after thinking for a while. One of the boys ran and brought a bucket of water.

The intelligent lad started pouring the water into the hollow of the trunk. Very soon, the water level came up, bringing the light ball floating to the surface. Immediately, one of the boys picked it up and threw it up in the air, joyfully shouting "Hip, Hip, Hurrah!" All the boys joined him in this cheer and, with beaming faces, ran off to the playground to continue their game.

Who do you think was the smart lad? He was none other than our Chacha Nehru.

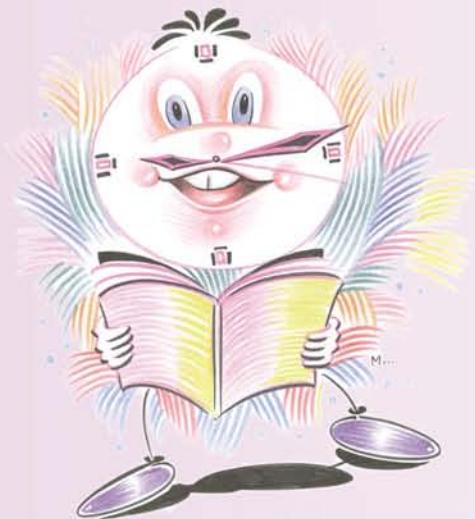
— A. Eswar Rao (13), Jaggayyapet.



## SPRING

Spring is here, Spring is here  
 It's the time when flowers bloom  
 Spring is here, Spring is here  
 There is no school.  
 Spring is here, Spring is here  
 We go out to have fun  
 Spring is here, Spring is here  
 It's my favourite season of the year.  
 Spring is here, Spring is here  
 The days get longer and the air gets hotter  
 Spring is here, Spring is here  
 I have a lot more fun than in winter.  
 Spring is here, Spring is here  
 We say bye bye to warm clothes  
 Spring is here, Spring is here  
 We say hi to cool new clothes.  
 Spring is here, Spring is here  
 It's the beautiful time of the year  
 Spring is here, Spring is here  
 I wish it stays forever here!

— Vivek Vinayak (9), California, USA



## LIFE

Life, a struggle,  
 is always full of giggles and riddles.  
 Giggles need humorous acts  
 riddles need common sense.  
 Time is the teacher and director of life,  
 without him it's impossible to ripe  
 without him we are an absolute zero.  
 Education is the heroine;  
 without her, every moment  
 we're on a road of glycerine.  
 We fall every second and  
 break our bones every now and then.  
 So, remember  
 without education, our heroine,  
 life is boring.



— Abhipsa Behera (12), Sambalpur.

**Kores** contest **cut 'n' paste**

Make a Pencil-Pen Holder by using Korostick  
 First Ten Early Winners will get **EXCITING GIFT BOX**  
 filled with fun and Three Winners will receive  
**EXCLUSIVE GIFT HAMPERS** fill with Masti &  
 Maza from Kores India Ltd. Send your entries  
 With this advt. Cutting & empty wrapper  
 At the below address before 31st August ,2003

CRAFT TEACHER SAYS,  
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"DADDY,  
 PLEASE PICK  
 A KOROSTICK ON  
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**KOROSTICK**  
 STICKS ON IT

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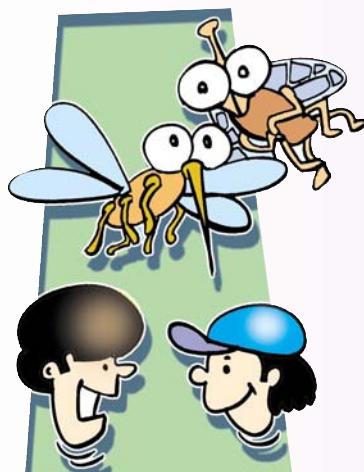
**Ramesh** : Do you know how cool it is in Antarctica?

**Raju** : No. How cool is it?

**Ramesh** : The people there get into the fridge to get warm.



— **G.Ramsri Goutham (12),  
Mahboob Nagar**



**Ravi** : What is another difference between a mosquito and a fly?

**Ramu** : Simple. A fly can fly, but a mosquito cannot mosquito.

**Customer (in a shop)** : Do you have colour TVs?

**Man behind the counter** : Sure.

**Customer** : Give me a green one, please.

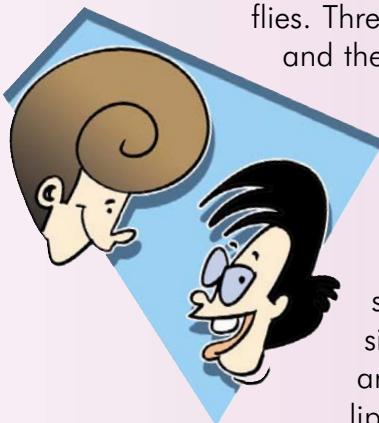


— **M.V.A.S. Krishna (12), Hyderabad**

**Ramu** : Yesterday I killed five flies. Three of them were male and the rest were female.

**Shamu** : How did you know which were male and which female?

**Ramu** : That is very simple. The three were sitting on a shaving kit and the rest two on a lipstick.



**Patient** : Doctor, I snore so loudly that I wake myself up. What should I do?

**Doctor** : Sleep in another room!



**A father asked his son if he liked going to school. The son's reply was..** "Yes, I very much enjoy going to school and I like coming home even better, but the thing in between is what I cannot stand at all.



— **Nithya Ramachandran (11), Chennai**

Geometry box Correction Pen 6ml Glue Stick **Kores**



Make a paper bag using Geometry box and Glue stick instruments First Ten Early Winners will gets EXCITING GIFT BOX filled with fun and Three Winners will receive EXCLUSIVE GIFT HAMPERS fill with Masti & Maza from Kores India Ltd. Send your entries With this advt. Cutting & empty wrapper of glue stick at the below address before 31st August ,2003

# RIDDLES

1. What is that which goes 'on and on' with 'i' in the middle?
2. What is it that starts with 'T', ends with 'T' and is full of 'T'?
3. Which letter reminds you of an insect?
4. Which month tells you to go forward?
5. Which tree do you have in your hand?
6. Which fruit comes every month?
7. Which letter is the name of a vegetable?
8. Which letter is the name of a drink?
9. Which letter asks a question?
10. Which letter contains water in it?

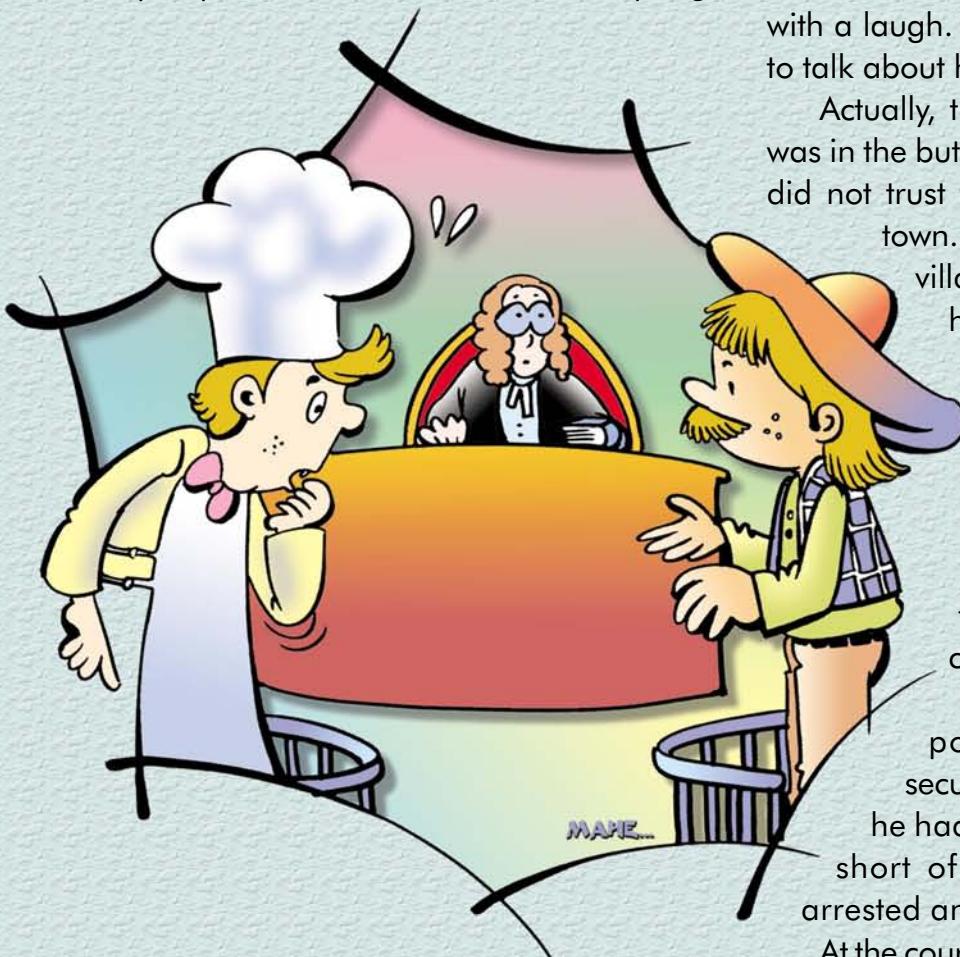
- N. Sai Prashanth (6), Mysore.

1. Onion, 2. Tea-pot, 3. Bee, 4. March, 5. Palm,
6. Date, 7. Pea, 8. Tea, 9. Why, 10. Sea

**ANSWERS:**

# The Baker and the Farmer

In a little town in England, there lived a baker called Harry Smith. He baked the most wonderful cakes and muffins and cookies in town. The cake he baked was so soft that if you pressed its surface with one finger, it would leave a deep impression on the cake. And his sponge



- What is the playing time of our national anthem?
- Where was Mahatma Gandhi on that historic night of August 15, 1947 when India became free?



cakes bounced back to shape like a rubber ball, when you pressed it slightly.

"What makes your cakes so extra special?" asked many a customer, licking their fingers after tasting a sample.

"Oh, that's a secret!" Harry would answer with a laugh. And nothing could persuade him to talk about his secret.

Actually, the secret of his wonderful cakes was in the butter that Harry used for baking. He did not trust the butter sold by grocers in his town. He would go all the way to a small village just outside the town and buy his butter from a farmer who lived there. And thanks to that butter, his cakes turned out to be simply delicious.

But not for long. There came a day, when the pound of butter he bought seemed lighter to him than usual. He did not comment on it.

The next time he bought a pound of butter, it once again secured a few ounces lighter. This time he had the butter weighed and found it short of a pound. He had the farmer arrested and brought to court.

At the court, the judge questioned the farmer. "How do you weigh the butter? Do you use scales?" he asked.

"Yes, Your Honour! But I do not have weights," answered the farmer.

"Well, then how do you measure your butter?" asked the puzzled Judge.

"Well, I have a pair of scales. For the weights, I use the pound of bread that I buy from the baker, Henry."

# Newsflash

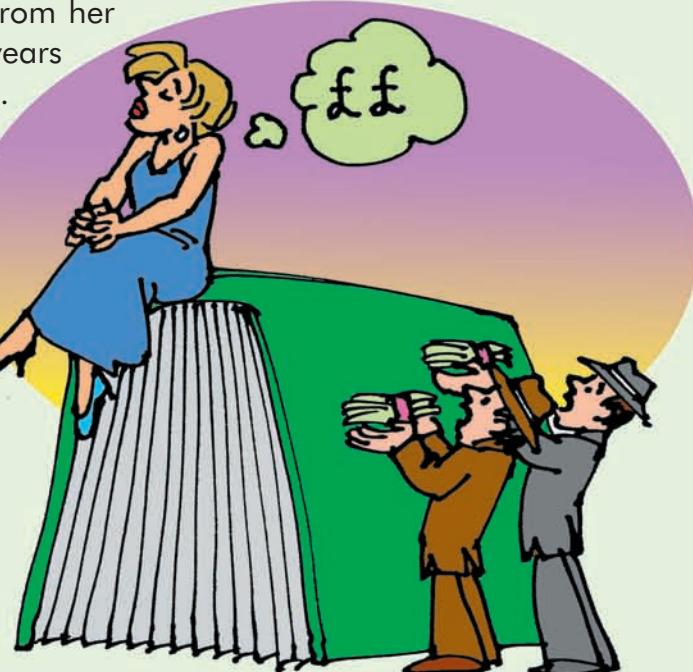


## Madonna's maiden book

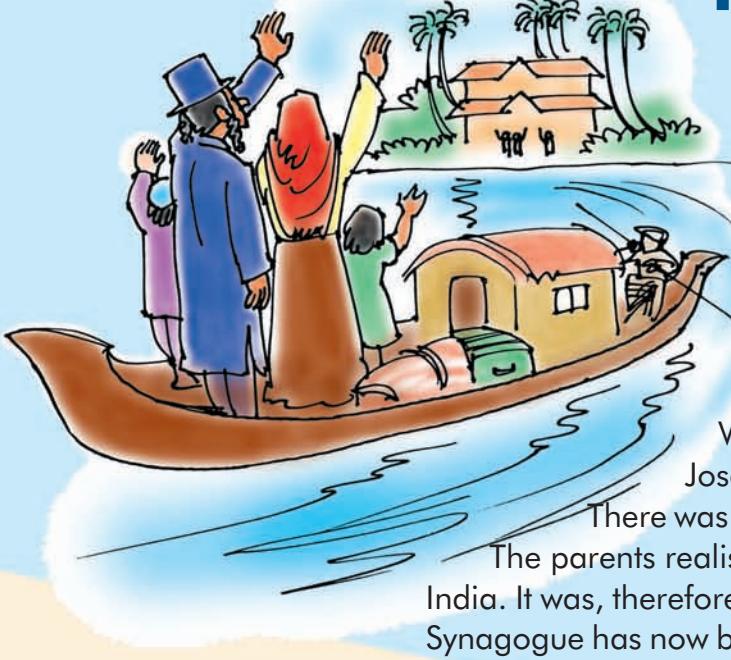
The well-known pop singer, Madonna, is the latest to join the exclusive group of writers for children. She is writing five books, the first of which titled *English Roses* is slated for release in September. Her publisher, Penguin, claims that the book can be appreciated by children of different cultures and is confident that it will become more popular than the current rage—the Harry Potter series. Madonna's books are meant for children below 7 years and the drawings have been made by leading illustrators from different parts of the world.

## First book fetches record price

Sheila Qwigglee will no longer need government help for sustenance, because she has become a millionaire overnight from her first novel. When her husband left her some thirty years ago, she did not have an income to fall back upon. The government went to her help by giving her free accommodation in a house in Sunderland. Three years ago, she had to give up the house as it was being demolished. She ran hither and thither for a suitable roof over her head. It was then that she started writing a novel which she has titled *Run for Home*. If publishers are normally wary of first-time authors especially the aged among them, Sheila has proved them wrong. Four leading publishers offered her £250,000; however, Random House clinched the deal by giving her double that amount for the publishing rights. According to the publisher, Sheila has the makings of a promising writer.



## No more Jews in India



The last of the Jewish families has bade goodbye to India and gone back to their fatherland, Israel. Joseph Simon, wife Yahudit, and children Sam and Susan stood before the 600-year-old synagogue in Paravur, in Kerala, for a few minutes, then turned back and got into the waiting car. Assembled to see them off were the other residents of the Jewish street which, till 50 years ago, had only Jewish families living there.

When families and after families left the place, Joseph Simon and family found themselves isolated.

There was none to join in their traditional rituals and festivals.

The parents realised that the two children would not get partners in India. It was, therefore, imperative that they returned to their society. The Synagogue has now been declared a protected monument.

## Farmer a "guest" lecturer

Rangaswami is an 84-year-old farmer of Coimbatore. He had regular schooling only up to the 8th Standard. Would you believe that he teaches higher mathematics in six aided colleges as well as an engineering college? He knows only Tamil, so his lectures are translated into English by the regular maths teachers in the institutions where he goes as a 'guest' lecturer. In the engineering college, he teaches subjects like functional and differentiate calculus, algebra, and measurements and design-based mathematics. In 1985, he found a solution to Srinivasa Ramanujan's Problem of Powers, and in no time he was known all over the world. He can multiply and divide numbers up to 24 digits without the aid of a table. He has been leading a solitary life ever since he lost his wife and son. When he is not lecturing, he gets busy on his 9-acre farm and himself does everything from tilling. Since 1989, he is a member of the Association of Mathematics Teachers of India. Many may not recognise Rangaswami in his simple dhoti-banian-shawl outfit as he enters the portals of a college.



# THE DULL PRINCE

Once, the king was in the forest with his four sons on a hunt. The king was an ace shot. Arrows flew from his bow like bolts of lightning, and they hardly missed their mark.

The first three princes was as good as their father. But it was quite different with the youngest prince. He did not share their enthusiasm for hunting.

In the evening, the king relaxed and took stock of his sons' achievements. He was proud of his eldest son, quite happy with the next two sons, but disappointed with the fourth. "I am ashamed of him," he murmured.

The king bade the members of his party to proceed to the palace, carrying their game with them. He wanted to spend some time in the company of a hermit who lived



in the forest. A little after sunset, the king and his sons reached the hermit's dwelling. The hermit's disciples entertained the royal party. Soon, the king was alone with the hermit.

"Why do you look so pensive, dear king?" asked the hermit.

"Well," answered the king, "I'm worried about my youngest son. He is so dull! I wonder what I'm going to do with a good-for-nothing boy like him."

"What makes you think that he is good-for-nothing?" asked the sage.

"Today, while each of my three sons bagged some game, the youngest failed to kill any," replied the king. "Imagine a prince who can't shoot straight!"

The hermit was silent for a moment. He then called the youngest prince and questioned his actions.

The prince looked thoughtful and answered in a soft

voice, "To kill just for sport appeared meaningless to me."

Meanwhile, the king had sent for his other sons. The king whispered to the sage, "Just watch. I shall give all four of them the same task. I'm sure the youngest will take longer to do it than the rest."

The king then gave one guava to each prince and said, "Go in different directions. Eat the fruit when no one is observing you and come back to us."

The princes dispersed. The eldest prince returned soon, and said triumphantly, "I went near the stream. No one was there. I finished eating the guava."

The second prince returned a while later. "I went near the stream. But in the moonlight I saw a monkey watching me. I then hid behind a bush and ate the fruit," he said.

The third prince arrived and said, "I'm sorry for being late. But I knew the owls can see in the night. So I went into the meadow and ate the fruit."

The sage and the king asked the three princes to return to the palace. The two sat waiting for the youngest prince. Time passed.

"Didn't I tell you? See how long he takes to do such a simple thing!" the king fumed.

The youngest prince returned at last, the guava still in his hand!

"So you failed to find the right place to eat your guava, eh?" burst out the king.

The prince looked at him with sadness in his eyes, but kept quiet.

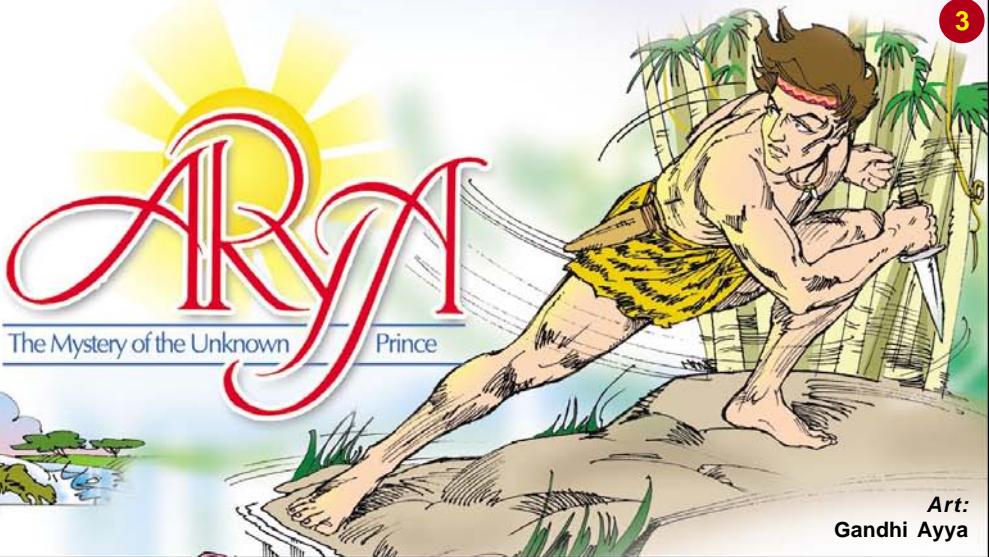
But the hermit stood up and received the boy with great warmth and asked, "Why haven't you eaten the guava, my son?"

"O sage! I was asked to eat the fruit when no one observed me. But I could find no such place. Is there a time or place when I am beyond the vision of God?" asked the prince.

The sage embraced him. Looking at the king, he said, "O king, this boy is not meant for you. He is a great soul. Leave him here."

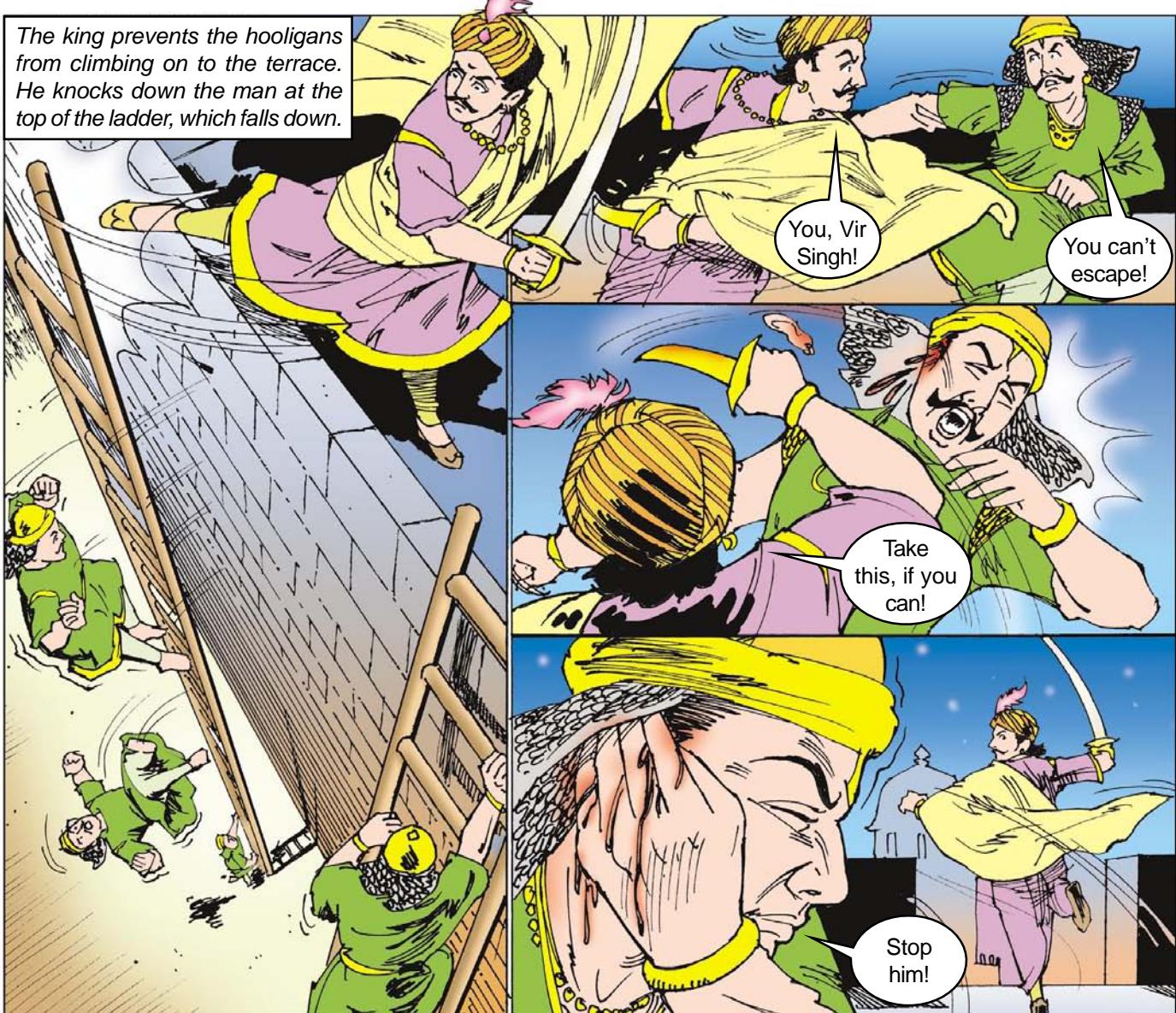
The king realised that his youngest son was destined for greatness. The prince remained with the hermit and later became a *yogi*.

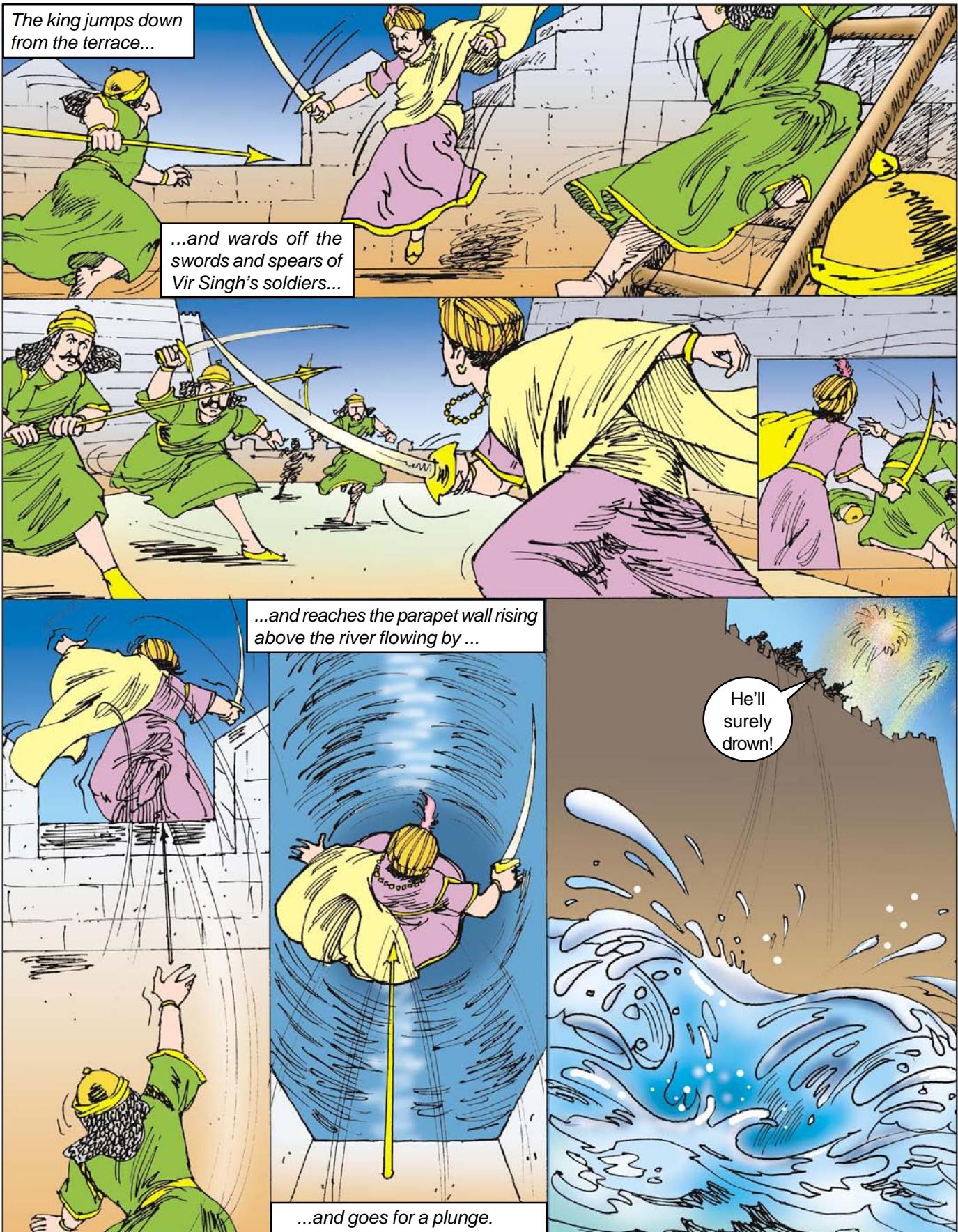
**Following news about  
a conspiracy, King  
Shantidev helps his  
queen and son to  
escape. General Vir  
Singh's men attack him  
but he saves himself...**

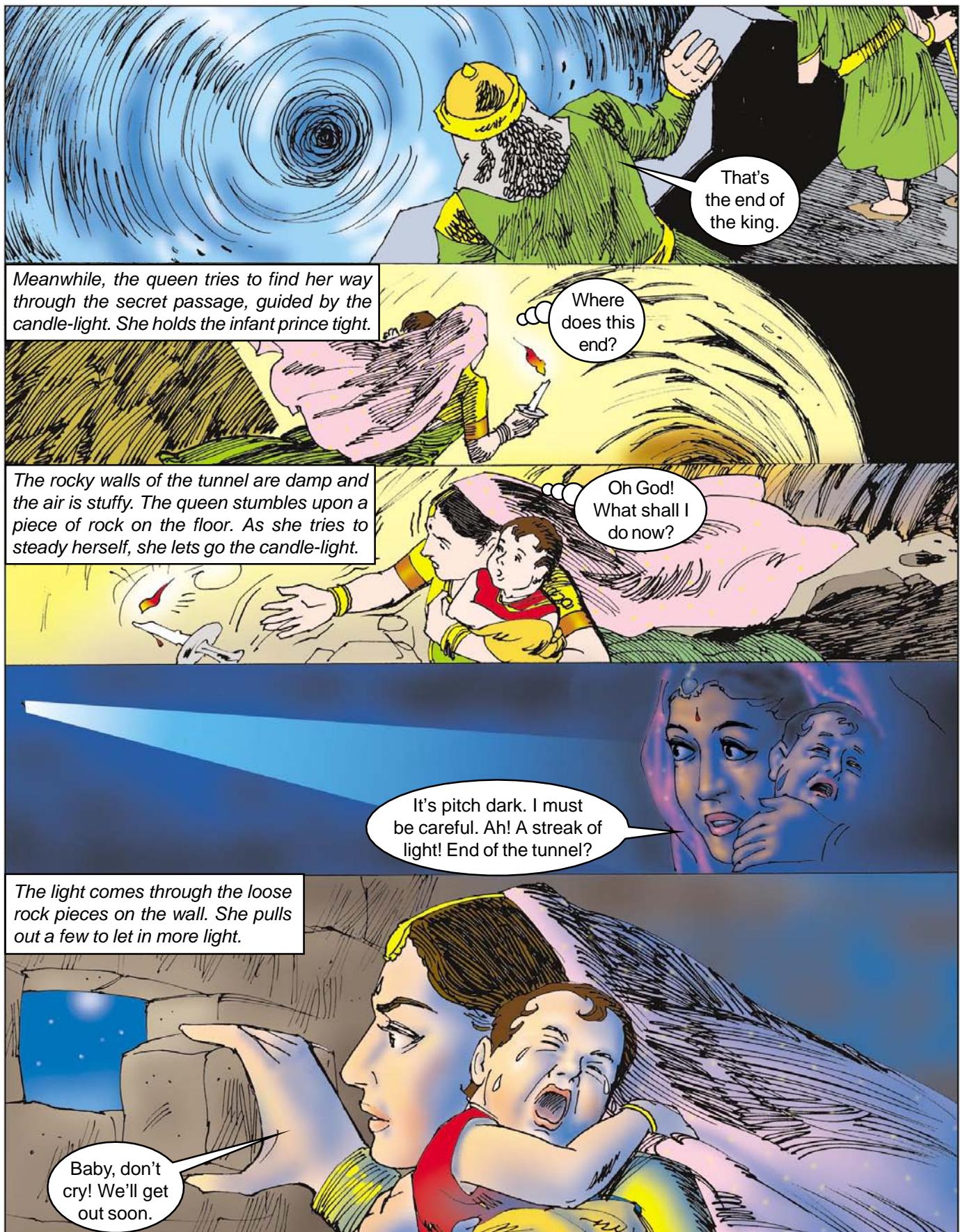


Art:  
Gandhi Ayya

*The king prevents the hooligans from climbing on to the terrace. He knocks down the man at the top of the ladder, which falls down.*







The queen pushes a slab and realises that she has reached the end of the tunnel.

She pushes the slab back to its position, and turns around to pick up the baby, who has already crawled away to some distance.

Because of exhaustion, the queen faints.



To continue

# The Young Guardians

**A**long the narrow path that crawled through the forest, Prabhu ran as fast as his nine-year-old legs could carry him, towards the village. His lungs were screaming for more air, but he couldn't afford to wait. The words that Manjunath had said rang harshly in his ears over and over again. "The whole village is in trouble now because of you!" As Prabhu ran, he thought about the day it had all started...

It was just two months back. It had been a holiday because of the meeting the adults were having in their village that day. Adavimallapura is a small, remote village situated in Karnataka. The village has no roads, electricity or telephone. The villagers have to walk four miles to the nearest bus stop.

The people were very poor, and the only wealth they have was the forest that stood by the village. In spite of all this, Prabhu loved Adavimallapura. The meeting that day was to discuss how to use various government schemes to improve the conditions of Adavimallapura village.

The meeting was being held in Prabhu's school. The children in the village were shooed away from the meeting.

"What will you understand? You'll just get bored," his mother had told him.

"Not fair!" Prabhu shouted, as he kicked a stone in the field near the forest. It was a hot afternoon and nobody was outside. So, no one heard him except Manjunath. Manjunath was Prabhu's classmate and best friend.

"I would like to know what plans they make for our village at the meeting. After all, this is my village, too!" Prabhu complained.

"Oh, Prabhu, you know these elders. They think we are small children. What can we do to prove otherwise?" Manjunath said as

a matter of fact. Prabhu opened his mouth to argue but froze at what he saw.

Four bullock carts piled with wood were moving stealthily from their forest towards the neighbouring village. "They are stealing wood from our forest...they...they have cut our trees!" Manjunath whispered to Prabhu as they looked on.

Prabhu was furious. "*This is outrageous. These men have to be stopped. What can just the two of us do?*" Prabhu thought. He suddenly had an idea. He turned towards Manjunath and said, "Go get the elders, quick!" Manjunath looked at Prabhu for a brief second. He then sped towards the village.

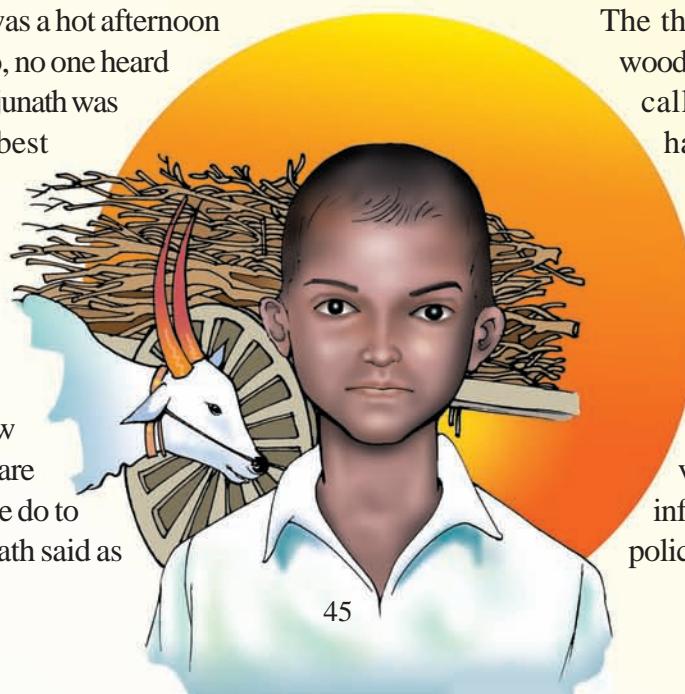
Prabhu was scared as he walked up to the bullock carts. With a stern voice he said, "Hey, cutting trees is wrong. Besides, those trees are very precious to us. I'll get you arrested for this... I won't let you take them."

The thieves started laughing at the little boy. Prabhu was prepared. He sat on the ground, in front of the bullock carts. "Very well, if you want to take the wood, you can take it over me!"

The men suddenly stopped laughing. They did not know what to do. And before they could even think of a way out, the angry villagers came running. Things happened very fast after that.

The thieves were tied up and the wood confiscated. The police were called and the culprits were handed over to them. Prabhu suddenly became a hero in the village. There was great celebration in the village that day...

But the happiness of the Adavimallapur villagers was short lived. The neighbouring villagers were rich and influential people. They had the police officers on their side. They

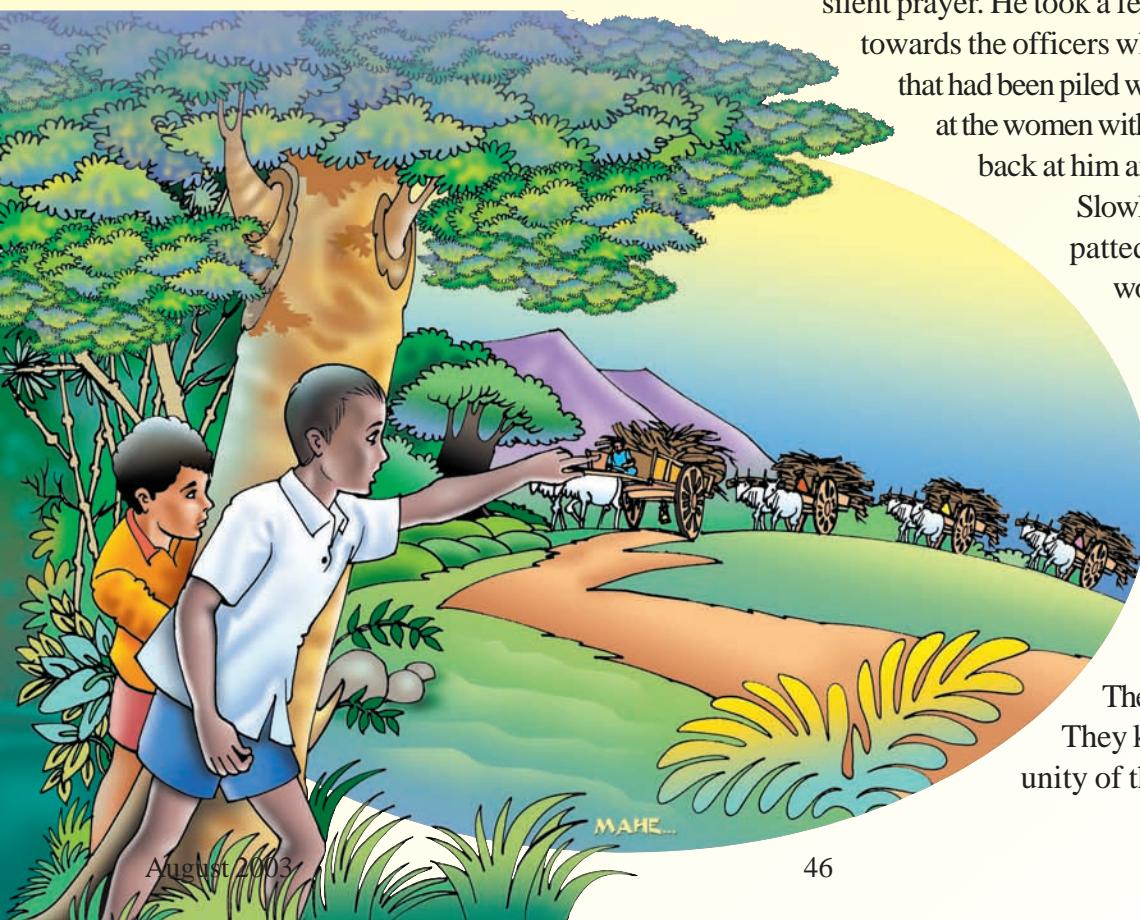


This is a true incident which took place in Adavimallapur, a small village in North Karnataka. Prabhu is 12 years old now and is in the 6th Standard. He wants to become a government officer and serve his village and country. He has set an example for all the other children in the village. Most villages have a forest nearby. These forests support the villagers with non-timber forest produce, like firewood, honey, fruits, medicinal herbs, and so on. Like in Adavimallapur, many villagers are now aware of their duties and rights towards the village forest. They protect and manage their village forest on their own and make sure that their forest is being conserved and not exploited by outsiders.

got the thieves released and together planned for revenge. They registered a false complaint with the police that the Adavimallapur villagers were cutting trees from the forest illegally!

One day, Prabhu had been to the forest to water a few plants that he had planted when Manjunath came running to him. He told him that the forest officers had arrived in the village. They had seen the wood that had been confiscated from the thieves and were now accusing the Adavimallapur villagers of cutting those trees!

Prabhu didn't wait to hear more. He ran towards the village. 'Why are my people being punished? Is it my fault? What went wrong? Not fair!' he fumed.



He heard strange angry voices as he neared the village temple. He then saw officers threatening the villagers with arrest for cutting the trees. The officers were taking the wood with them.

Everybody knew that the wood would go back to the neighbouring villagers and that it was all according to the plans made by the neighbouring villagers and the thieves. They also knew that the police was with them and that the investigation was all a hoax. But no one was protesting. Prabhu stared helplessly. *What could he do?* He looked at all the women who were standing together by the side.

He closed his eyes, took a deep breath, and made a silent prayer. He took a few steps forward and looked towards the officers who were starting the tractors that had been piled with the wood. He then looked at the women with tears in his eyes. They stared back at him and then looked at each other.

Slowly an elderly aunt came to him, patted his head and said, "Don't worry!"

Then as if by a silent mutual agreement they all formed neat rows and sat in front of the tractors. "You can't take our wood!" they all said, calmly but sternly.

Soon the whole village joined them. The officers looked shocked and scared.

There was nothing they could do. They knew that the simplicity and unity of these villagers had defeated

them. They left the village ashamed and did not trouble them again.

The joy of the people knew no bounds that day. The villagers had learnt a lesson. Every child has its own role to play in conserving nature and should always be encouraged.

Prabhu, along with the other children in the village, took a vow to protect and conserve their forest. The children of Adavimallapur have since been participating

in the village meetings, planting saplings, watering, watching, and guarding the forest as a group.

Now, when one goes to the village of Adavimallapur, the first thing one would see is the enthusiasm and love the children have towards their village and forest. They are now better known as the 'young guardians' of the forest!

- Preethi Herman

**Courtesy: *Kalpavriksh and the National Biodiversity and Strategic Action Plan***

### When they were young:

## The fearless teenager

The year was 1921 - a time when the freedom movement in India was at its peak. Demonstrations were held and processions taken out every day. Several freedom fighters were arrested and imprisoned. One day, the police intercepted one such procession. Prominent among its leaders was a lad who could not have been more than 15. He was arrested and produced before a magistrate for trial.

The magistrate began his interrogation. "What is your name?" he asked.

"Azad (one who is free)!" replied the boy, coolly.

Frowning at his impertinence, the magistrate asked, "What is your father's name?"

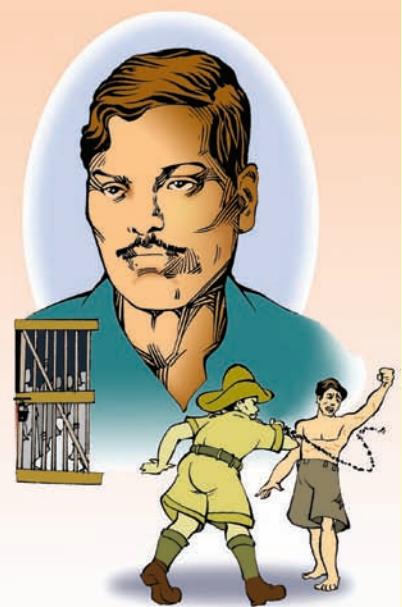
"Swatantrata (independence)!" was the boy's reply.

Now the magistrate was infuriated. However, trying to keep his cool, he asked, "Where is your home?" The boy replied, "In prison."

The magistrate really lost his temper. However, being a minor, the boy could not be sent to prison; so, he was sentenced to receive fifteen lashes. The sentence was carried out in an open ground near the prison. The boy bore his punishment without flinching. Every time the whip bit into his flesh, he would cry out "Vande Mataram! Mahatma Gandhi ki jai!" The sight of his bleeding back moved all the onlookers to tears, but the boy himself did not utter so much as a sigh of pain. On the contrary, he continued to shout slogans with renewed vigour.

Who was this remarkably brave boy, who displayed extraordinary patriotism by bearing his pain stoically? He was one of India's legendary freedom fighters, Chandra Shekhar - who, after this incident, became famous as Chandra Shekhar Azad.

Chandra Shekhar Azad (1906-1931) was a great revolutionary and a staunch patriot. He literally continued the fight against the British until his very last breath. On February 27, 1931, he was betrayed by an associate and traced by the police to a park in Allahabad. He single-handedly held a heavily armed police party at bay for over twenty minutes. However, the unequal battle was too much for him and he eventually died the death of a true martyr. Thus did India lose one of her greatest sons.





## Muskrat

Muskrat is a large, stout rodent with a round head, little ears, and webbed feet. The rodents are 30 cm long and weigh anything from 900 to 1,800 gm. Their tails are long, and hairless.

Muskrats get their name from their strong musky odour. They are excellent swimmers and divers. They are adapted for semi-aquatic lives and generally inhabit wetlands that have an abundant supply of vegetation like swamps, marshes, lakes, ponds, and streams. Like beavers, muskrats also build their own nests or live in burrows dug on the shore.

In winter, they live in a cosy dome-shaped nest that is built using roots, stems, twigs, and mud. These are usually built on swamps. Each nest has two rooms or chambers. In summer, the muskrats live in a nest made of grass.

Muskrats eat water plants, frogs, fish, vegetables, insects, and worms. They are nocturnal animals but are sometimes seen during the day.

The muskrat's coat is soft, dense, and waterproof. Because of this they are hunted in large numbers.



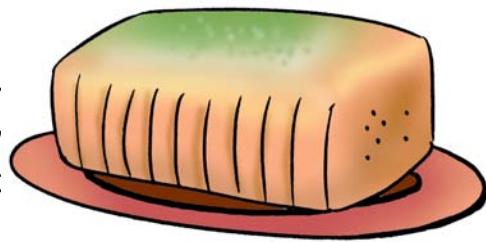
## Mold

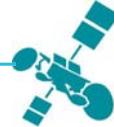
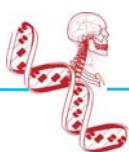
What is the green stuff that you find on that bread slice you had left a week ago? It is actually mold. This velvet-like, powdery growth is often found growing on old, decaying, rotting plants, food, or animals.

Mold is actually a small fungus plant and grows in warm, moist places. The mold plant is so tiny that it can be seen only under a microscope. For you to spot mold on a bread slice, more than a couple of hundred plants must grow at the same place!

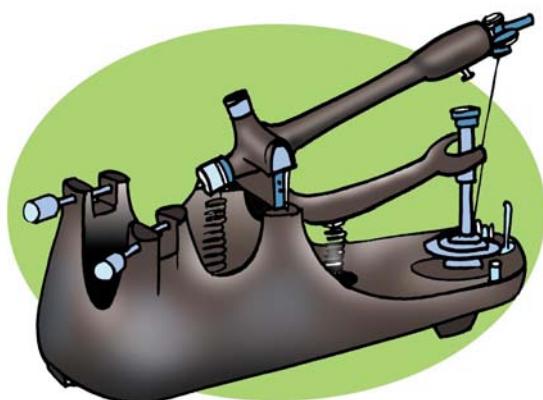
Though mold is green, the plant does not contain chlorophyll and hence, cannot prepare its own food. It gets its food from the host — dead and rotten plants or animal flesh. Mold has a thread like structure that settles itself on to its host. Little round heads, called spore cases (*sporangium*) that contain thousands of spores, form on these threads.

When a spore from a mold settles on a host, it bursts open and sends out hair-like threads. When they break open, they are carried by air to other areas and develop into a new plant where they fall. Soon the host is fully covered with mold.





## Microtome



No, a microtome does not mean a small volume or book! A microtome is actually an instrument used to cut extremely thin slices of microscopic specimens. With the help of this instrument, even opaque materials can be cut into thin slices.

A microtome consists of a very sharp blade that can be adjusted so that it can cut the required specimen at various angles and to a required thickness.

The slices are measured in microns or 1/1000 of a millimetre. The specimens are made firm, usually by using carbon dioxide to freeze them. The frozen material is then sectioned. An alternative method of sectioning is by dehydrating the specimen through treatment with alcohol and xylol.

There are many types of microtomes like *rocking, sliding, rotary, freezing, hand, vibrating, and ultramicrotome*.

- Compiled by Vidhya Raj

## Activity

1. Mg	a. Manganese
2. Md	b. Molybdenum
3. Hg	c. Meitnerium
4. Mo	d. Magnesium
5. Mt	e. Mercury
6. Mn	f. Mendelevium

Given below are the symbols and the names of elements beginning with 'M'. Match the symbol with its right name.



5 - c; 6 - a

3 - e; 4 - b;

1 - d; 2 - f;

Answers:

- Compiled by Vidhya Raj

# FUN TIMES



1

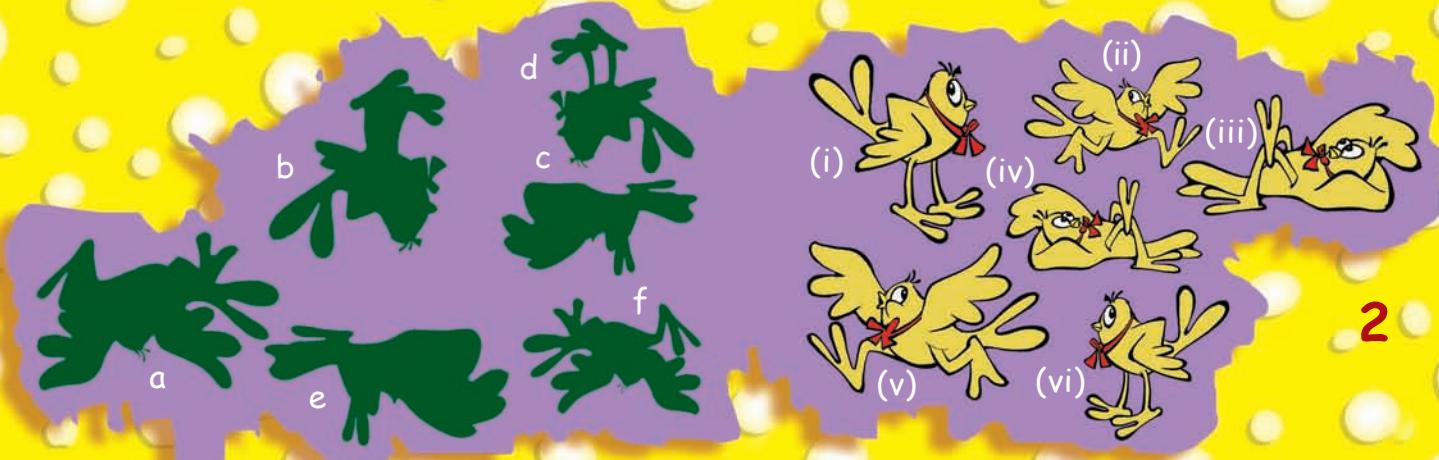
Hey there!  
Have fun finding  
the eight differences  
in the two pictures.



Magic of shadows  
on the ground. Match  
them with the birdy  
from the town.



1



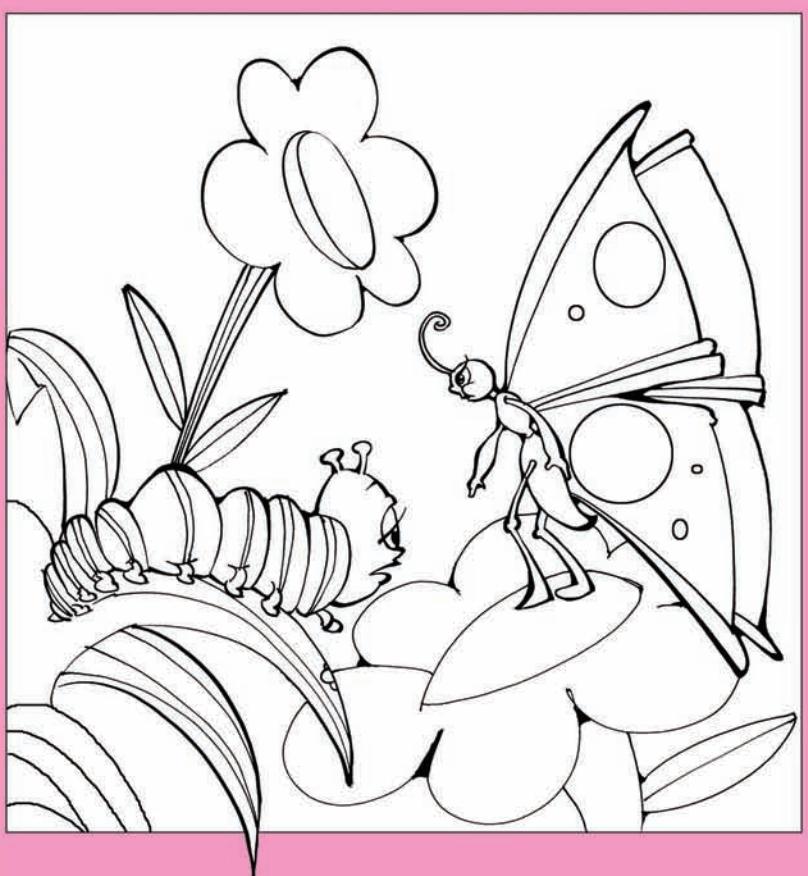
2



Colour me right!  
Colour me  
bright!

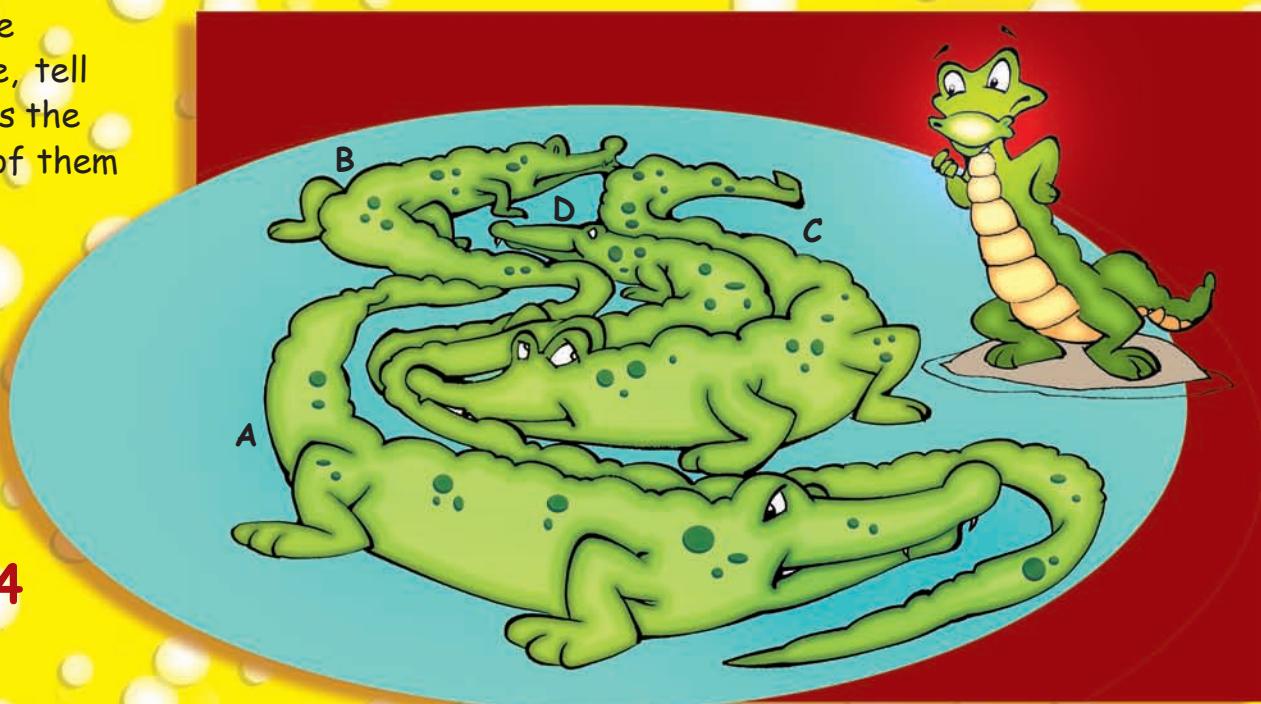


3



(Answers on page 64)

Crocodile  
crocodile, tell  
me who is the  
longest of them  
all?



4

# Story of Ganesa

## 20. Punishment for greed

The Vighneswara temple in Vatapi was full of sculptures based on the 'leelas' of the Lord, especially how He went to the help of devotees whenever they ardently prayed for his benevolence.

Satyasarma and Lobhagupta lived in the same village, and were neighbours. Lobhagupta's original name was Labhagupta; however, when people saw how greedy he was, they began to call him Lobhagupta. The name stuck.

Both, he and Satyasarma, regularly visited the nearby Siva temple. The latter would first offer prayers at the small temple of Ganesa at the entrance. Only then would he go and pray before the main sanctum sanctorum. On the other hand, Lobhagupta would prostrate before the idol of Siva, all the while praying for more wealth.

One day, as Satyasarma was leaving the temple, Lobhagupta had reached the entrance. The sacred Nandikeswara, the mount of Lord Siva, guarding the entrance, was heard asking Ganesa: "O Vighneswara! You are aware how your devotee Satyasarma is struggling in life. Why don't you go to his help?"

"All right, Nandi," said Vighneswara, "by evening today, he will receive a thousand rupees."

Lobhagupta, who happened to overhear this conversation between the statue of Nandi and idol of Vighneswara stood stupefied for some time. By the time he concluded his worship of Lord Siva, he had thought up a plan to earn some money.

He went to Satyasarma's house. He told him, "Satyasarma, I know you've financial

difficulties. I shall give you five hundred rupees. You may return the amount when you get some money in the evening." as they were keen to perform their daughter's marriage, and the boy's parents had been asking for money to buy jewellery.

Satyasarma was surprised for a moment. He also suspected Lobhagupta's motive as he was notorious for his greed. When Satyasarma's wife saw him hesitating, she called him aside and prodded him: "The boy's parents are waiting. Let's take the money and send them away."

That was a practical suggestion. Satyasarma said: "All right, I shall take the money, but I don't expect to receive any other money before evening, so that I can return the amount to you."

"Please don't worry about that," said Lobhagupta with some confidence. "After all, we are friends. If I come to your help now, I know you too will help me when such a need arises." He then handed five hundred rupees to Satyasarma and went away.

However, Lobhagupta found that there was no sign of any money reaching Satyasarma. Evening came, and he hurried to the temple. He caught hold of the trunk of Vighneswara and prayed, "O Lord! Please see that Satyasarma receives a thousand rupees." Suddenly he found that his palm had got entangled in the trunk. He was unable to free his hand which was being held firmly by the trunk. It started to hurt.

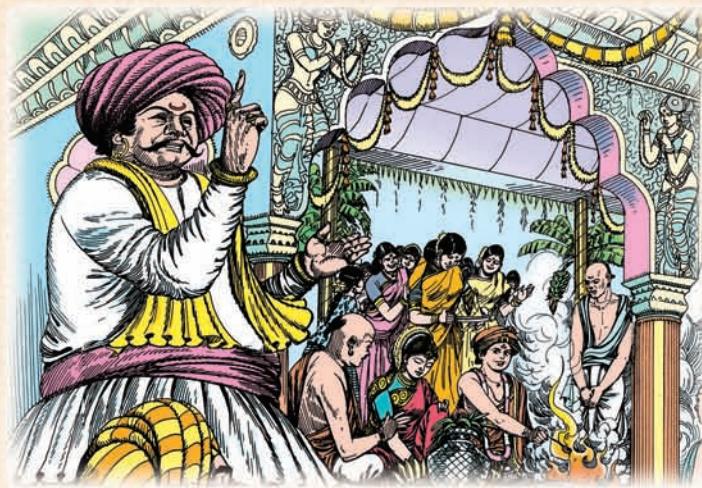
Lobhagupta began to cry. He now heard a voice coming



from the idol: "Promise me that you will yourself give a thousand rupees to Satyasarma. Only then will I set you free."

Lobhagupta hit his head with the other hand. "What injustice is this? I've already given him five hundred rupees!"

The voice was heard again: "So you were planning after giving him five hundred to grab a thousand rupees? What greed! Give him five hundred rupees more and don't ask him to return the amount. Treat it as your wedding



Later, he began to spend a large part of his ill-gotten wealth for the welfare of the people. The villagers now saw him as a philanthropist.

*(To continue)*

## A parting kick

Prakash was collecting donations for an orphanage. Someone suggested - "Why don't you meet Seth Gopinath, the wealthiest man in town? He'll surely help." Prakash thought it a good idea. He called on the Seth in the club.

Now, the Seth was a miser and the idea of spending on charity did not appeal to him at all. Nevertheless, he tried to fob off the request so publicly made! So, to put him off, he asked Prakash to meet him later.

The very next morning, Prakash went to the Seth's house. From an upstairs window, the Seth saw him entering his drive. "Oh! That nuisance has come!" he thought in irritation. "Never mind - I'll take care of him!" He summoned his servant and instructed him to tell the caller that he was out.

Prakash knocked on the door, and told the servant who opened it, "I've come to meet your master." As tutored, the servant quickly answered, "Oh! I'm sorry sir, but my master has just gone out. I don't know when he'll return."

"It's all right," said Prakash and turned to go. Then, as if struck by an after-thought, he paused to ask the servant, "Would you give your master a message?" The servant agreed.

"Then tell him that next time he goes out, he should take his face with him and not leave it at the window!" Having delivered this parting shot, Prakash walked off without a backward glance.

The Seth, who was upstairs listening to the conversation, blushed beet-red with embarrassment. It was only then that he realised that Prakash had seen him peeping from his window!

gift to his daughter, and her marriage as that of your own daughter. You make that promise here and now!"

Lobhagupta promised. Lo and behold, the trunk released his hand! He not only paid five hundred rupees more to Satyasarma, but made amends for his greed. He met the entire expenditure of the wedding.

*(To continue)*



# THE 'DIAMOND' THAT CAME BACK

In a certain city lived a diamond merchant. He was a cheat. He did not dare to deceive the people of his own city, but he never lost a chance to swindle a traveller from a faraway place who happened to come to him.

One day, an old man entered his shop. The merchant, as usual, welcomed him with a false smile.

"My grand-daughter is to get married. I am very fond of her. I would very much like to present a diamond to her. But I can spare only five hundred pieces of silver for

Five years later, a young man met the merchant. "You see, my ancestors were great aristocrats in our town. Even my grandfather was as rich as a duke. But times changed. We lost everything. I have been obliged to sell all our valuables. I have preserved only one thing till today, because it was my grandmother's favourite diamond. But I must sell it now. Will you please buy it? I, will give it cheap," the stranger said.

The diamond merchant's eyes glowed. From experience he knew that heirs of aristocratic families gave away gold at the price of copper. "Let me see the diamond," he said.

The young man brought out a small packet from his bag and opened it with great care. Inside it was a bright object.

The merchant picked it up with great curiosity. But only a glance at it was enough for him to understand that the object was only a piece of glass!

"My young friend! You are under an illusion. This is no diamond, but glass!" said the merchant.

"You are joking! This is a priceless heirloom. If you cannot appreciate its value, someone else would do!" asserted

the young man.

"Maybe. Why don't you take it to somebody else?" suggested the merchant.

"That means you don't believe it to be a diamond! I can, of course, take it to some true connoisseur of diamond and sell it at a reasonable price. But if I do so, you will never know that it is a precious diamond. Let me leave it with you. I don't want you to buy it. Just keep it in your shop. Pay me only when you have sold it!" said the young man.



it. Is there any diamond with you for that price? The ship by which I came is leaving in another one hour. I do not have the time to go to other shops," said the old man.

"Nowhere can you find a diamond for only five hundred pieces of silver. But I appreciate your love for your grand-daughter. I will give you an excellent diamond for your money," said the merchant. What he handed over to the old man was a piece of glittering glass.

The poor old man did not realise that he had been cheated. He left for the ship happily.

The merchant felt that he was wasting time with the stranger. In order to get rid of the young man he agreed to the condition and asked, "At what price should I sell it?"

"One thousand silver coins," said the young man. He left, saying that he will come after five or six months to see whether it had been sold or not.

The merchant heaved a sigh of relief. He threw the glass into one corner of his showcase and forgot about it.

Five months passed. One day a gentleman who looked like a member of some royal family came into the merchant's shop. "My cousin, the princess of Srimarg, is to get married. I am looking for some special diamonds," he said. The merchant showed him all the best pieces of diamond he had. But the gentleman rejected them all, saying that he had already bought similar things.

Suddenly his eyes fell on the piece of glass left by the young man. His face brightened up. "I was looking for this rare kind of diamond. At last I found one! Why did you not show me this one?" he demanded, feigning annoyance.

"Well, I think I have promised this to some other customer!"

The merchant tried to be clever. He was very surprised. Either the gentleman did not know anything about diamonds or he was himself ignorant of certain kinds of diamond!

"How much has the other customer promised to pay?" asked the gentleman.

The merchant decided to take advantage of the situation. "Two thousand silver coins," he said.

"Very well. I will pay you three thousand silver coins," said the gentleman.

"Take it then!" said the cheat.

"Not immediately. I reserve it with a payment of a hundred coins. I shall be back

with the rest in one week. If I don't come back, I forfeit the amount. You can sell it to your other customer," said the gentleman.

The merchant's joy knew no bounds. He could afford to pay the young man a thousand pieces of silver and still make a profit for himself. What a fine deal! He agreed gladly.

The very next day the young man met him. "If you have not sold my diamond already, please return it to me. I understand that the nephew of the king of Srimarg is in town. He is looking for rare varieties of diamond. I am sure, I can sell it to him for a thousand coins!" he said.

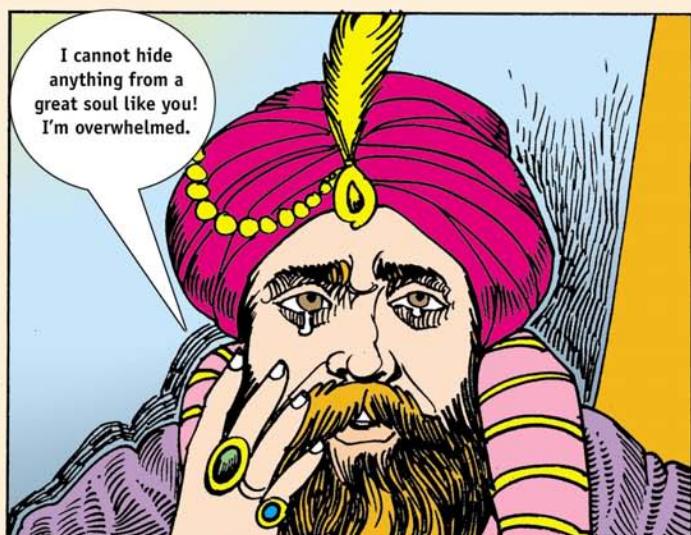
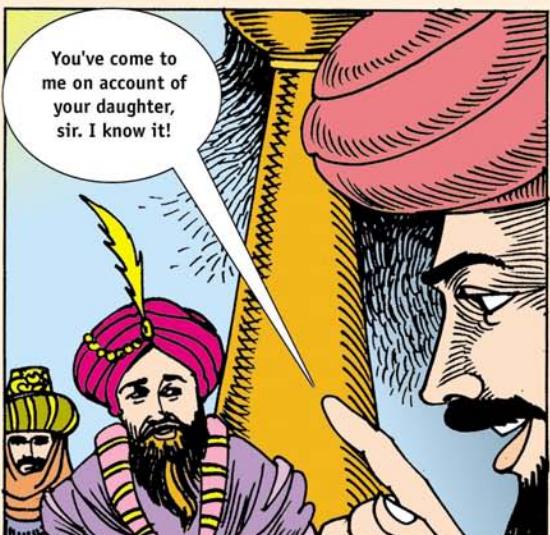
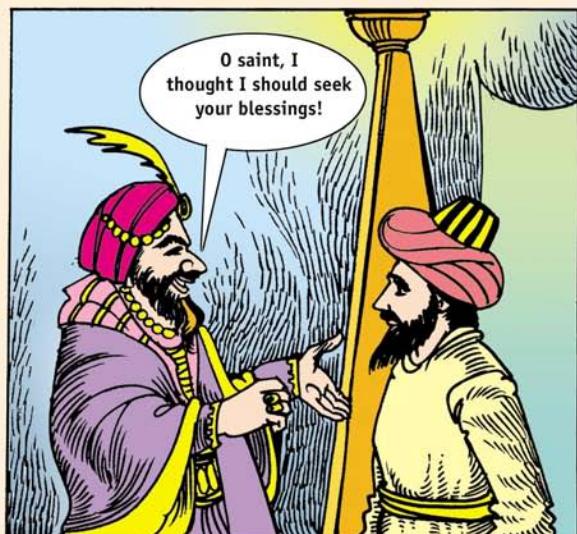
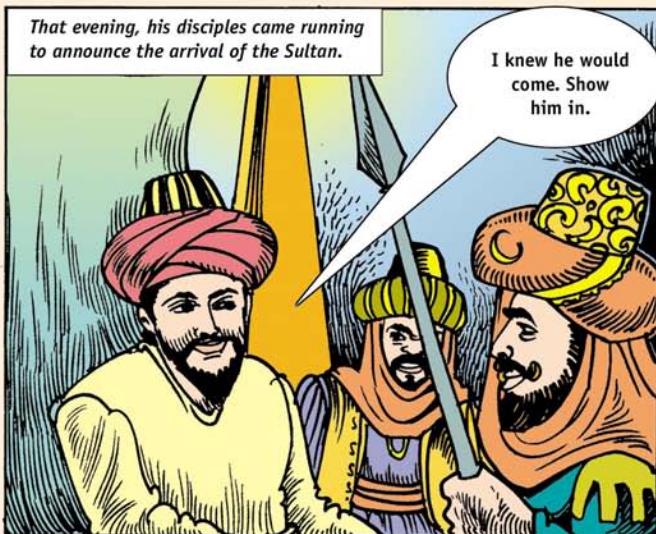
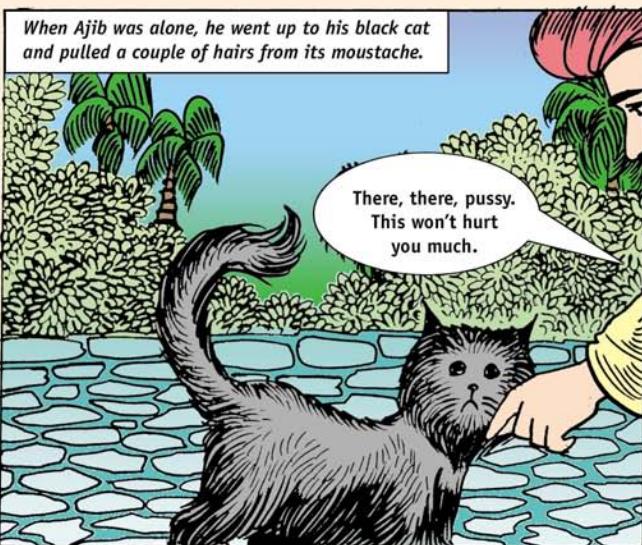
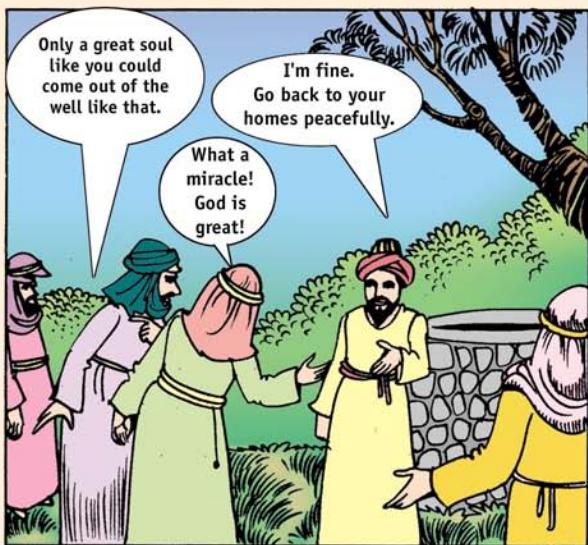
"Here is your thousand coins," said the merchant and he handed over the money to the young man.

The young man went away. The merchant waited for the king's nephew to come and collect the diamond. A week passed and then a fortnight and then a month. The king's nephew did not turn up, but the merchant received a letter from the young man through a traveller: "The diamond I sold you is the same that my grandfather had bought from you five years ago. He is no more. But I am happy that I could sell it to you for a profit. You must be happy to get your precious thing back!"

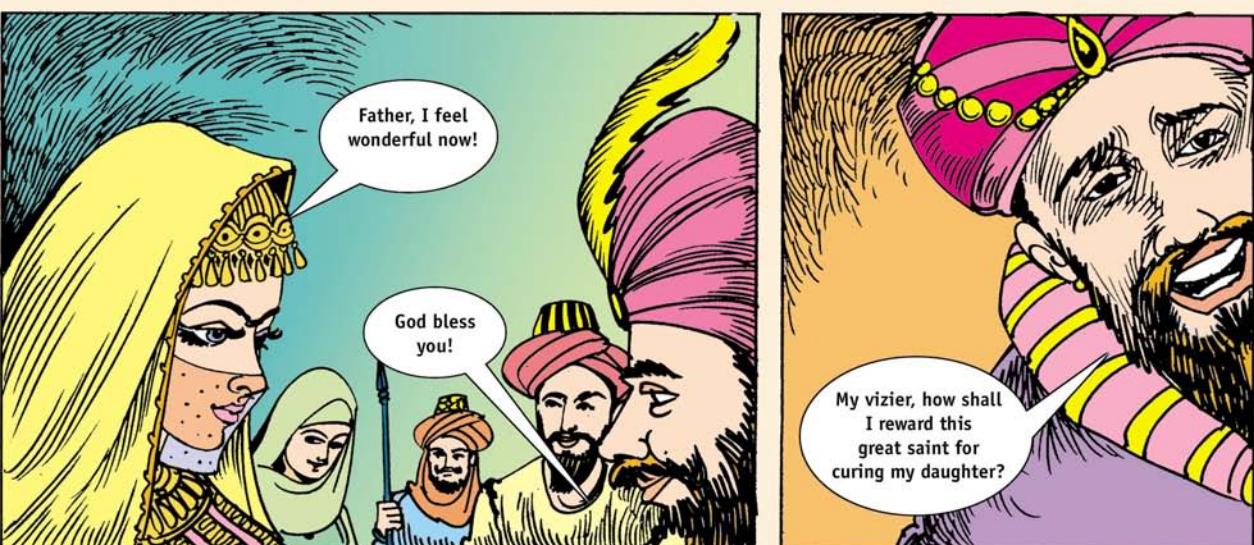
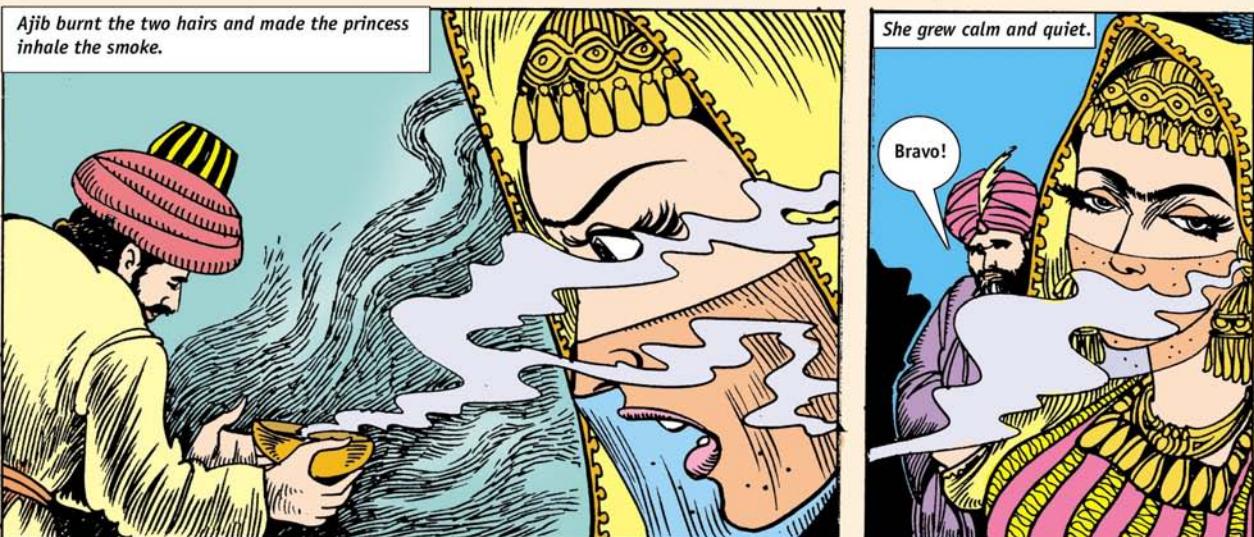
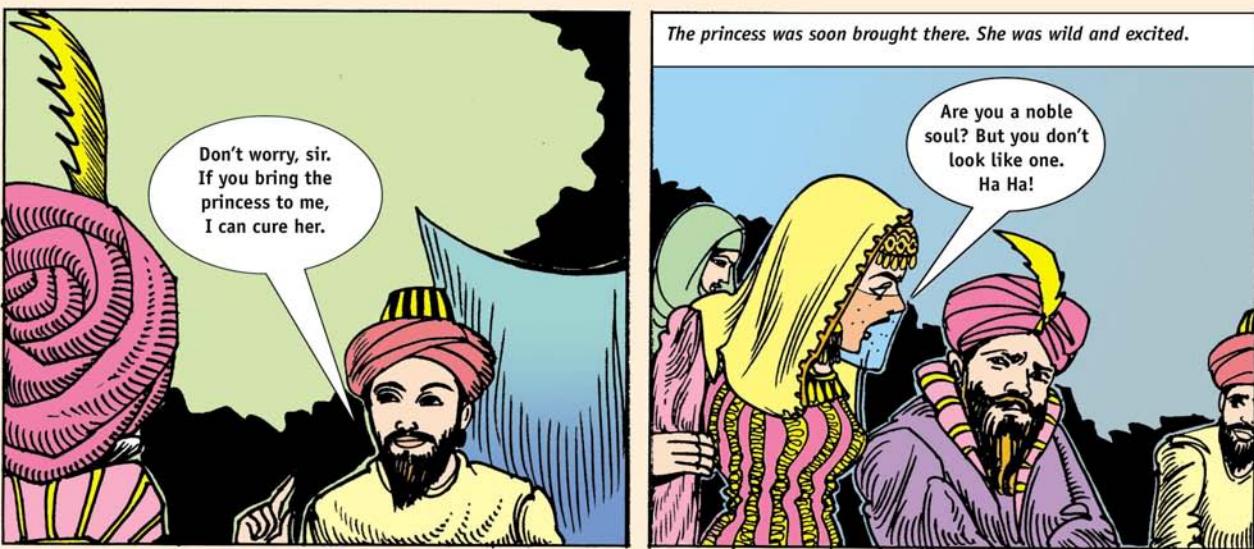
The merchant slapped his forehead and wept in rage.



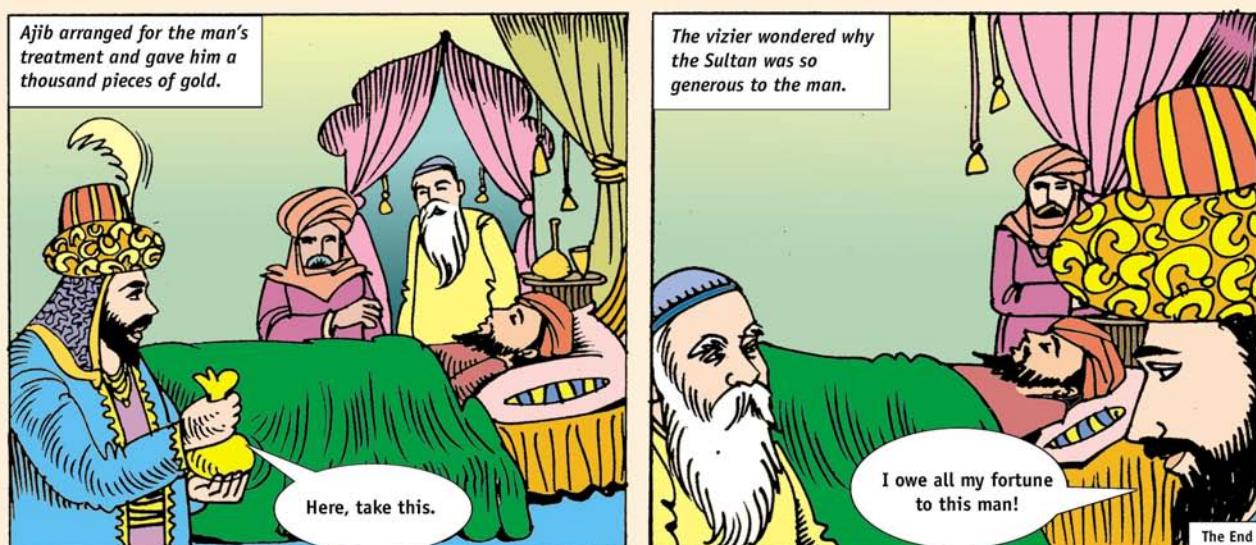
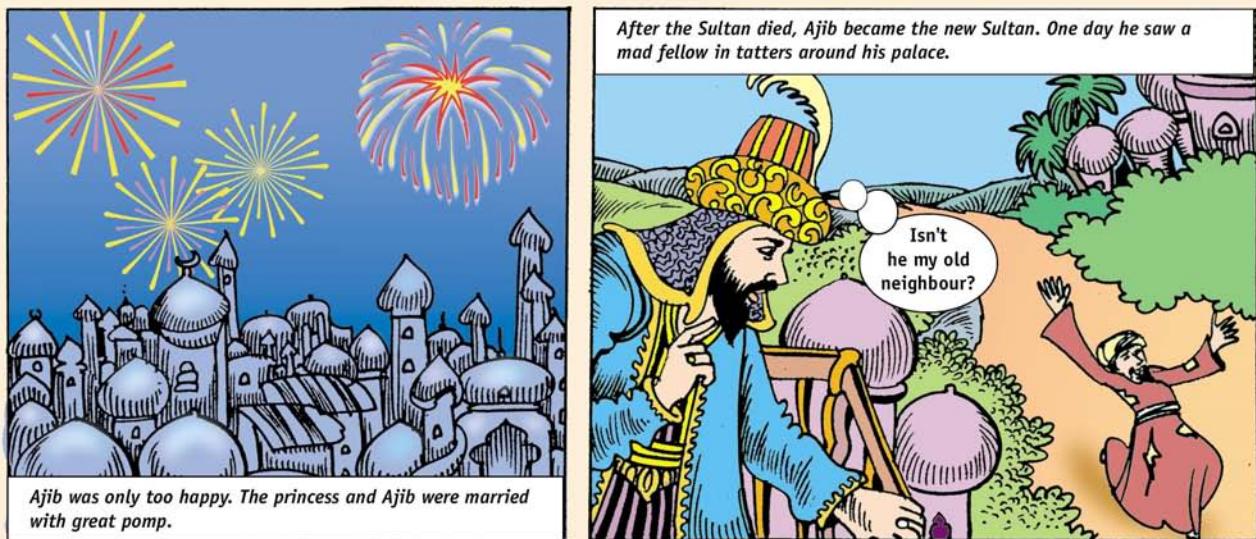
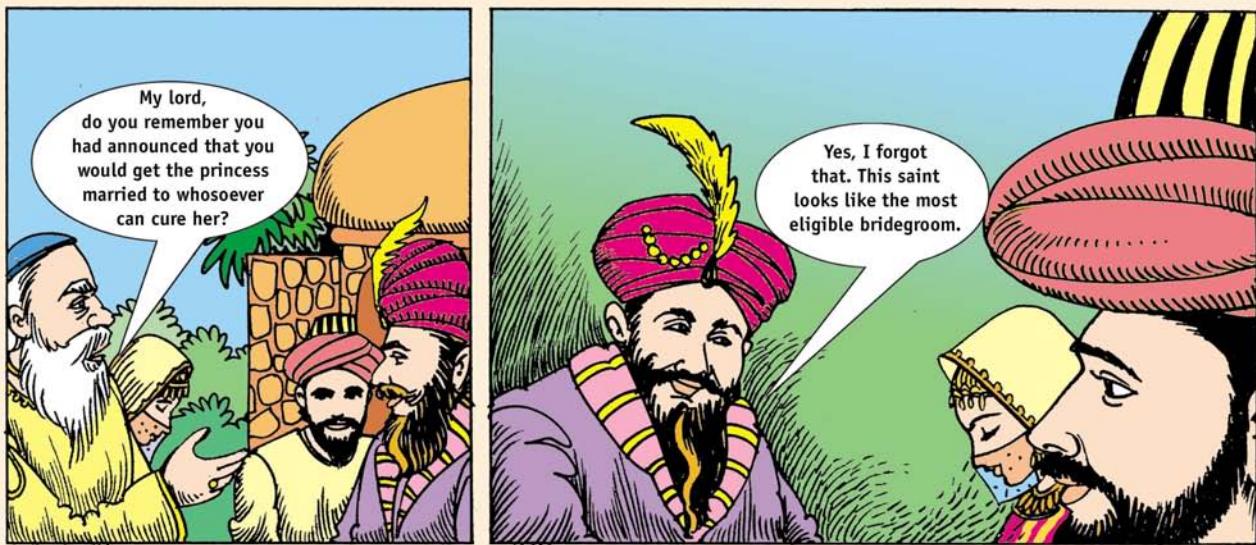
## The Arabian Nights : The envious and the gracious



## The Arabian Nights : The envious and the gracious



## The Arabian Nights : The envious and the gracious



**D. Chaitanya, Wanaparthy, has this to say:**

I liked Kaleidoscope very much. The items are very interesting. I like Fun Times and Puzzle Dazzle. Also the Humour page. In fact, the whole magazine is interesting.

**By e-mail from Ashwin Menon, Dubai:**

I saw a copy of *Chandamama* during my recent visit to Kerala. I enjoyed reading it. I liked the article on Mount Everest, and the facts appearing on other pages. I liked the jokes, too. Some of the stories were very interesting. 'Down the Ages', too, was interesting. I am looking forward to the next issue.



**P. Nivedhitha writes from Hyderabad:**

"The man with the strange insight" in your May issue was marvellous. My grandfather, father, and I (three generations) enjoy reading *Chandamama*, which is a boon to children. It helps me to keep up my knowledge of Indian culture and tradition. I hope *Chandamama* will be enriched with more picture-stories.

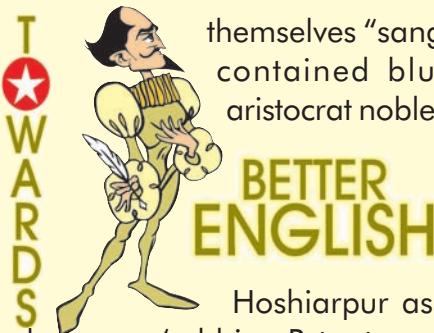
**By e-mail from Smita Poojari:**

I like *Chandamama* a lot. I am very fond of the Vikram-Vetala stories. I admire the other stories also. They increase our knowledge and give us wisdom. I think every child should read this magazine.

## Blood of a different colour!

The colour of blood is generally taken as red. In writings we often find expressions like "blue blood" in reference to aristocracy. What is the origin of the expression? asks **Meera Vishnunarayanan** of Thiruvalla, Kerala.

The European state of Spain was once ruled by Moors belonging to an Arab race. They were dark complexioned. Many women chose these dark-looking people for their husbands. However, the aristocrats, mostly living in Castile, did not intermarry. Being fair-looking, their veins appeared blue, and so they called



themselves "sangre azul", as though the veins contained blue blood! By and by, the aristocrat nobles of other European countries also began to identify themselves as blue-blooded.

**Soumitra Bhargav** of Hoshiarpur asks: What is the meaning of 'robbing Peter to pay Paul'?

To rob Peter to pay Paul means, you owe money to someone, and as you don't have any money to spare, you borrow from someone else to pay up. Thus you continue to be in debt, though to a different person.



- Where was Mahatma Gandhi on that historic night of August 14, 1947 when India became free?
- Every Independence Day, the national flag is hoisted from the ramparts of the Red Fort, Delhi. From which year did this practice become vogue: 1947, 1948, 1950?
- Who was the first woman Chief Minister of an Indian State?



# What August means to India

**A**ugust is the most important month in the Indian calendar of events. It was in August 1765 that Emperor Shah Alam granted the Dewani of several states to the East India Company, thereby laying the foundation for the British Empire. In August 1858, the British Government took over administration from the hands of the Company. The government's representative in India was given the title of Viceroy.

Sri Aurobindo's series of articles in *Indu Prakash* in August 1893 signalled a radical change in the Congress's policy, ultimately making the paper the herald of independence.

*Bande Mataram*, the great nationalist newspaper, was born in August 1906.

The British Government made what is famous as the "August Offer" on August 8, 1940, to enable India "to make the fullest possible contribution to world struggle against tyranny and aggression."

On August 9, Gandhiji gave the historic call "Quit India" to the British and "Do or Die" to the Indians. British repression followed.

August is memorable to all Indians because our country became independent at midnight of August 14, 1947. The speech made by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru still rings in our ears: "At the stroke of the midnight hour, when the world sleeps, India will awake to life and freedom. A moment comes, which comes but rarely in history, when we step from the old to the new."

The next morning Pandit Nehru, after being sworn in as the first Prime Minister of India, unfurled the national flag in Delhi.

There are two landmark dates in August in the history of our national flag, too. On August 7, 1906, a tricolour flag was hoisted in Calcutta on the occasion of the Boycott Day. People were protesting the partition of Bengal. The flag was hoisted by the veteran Congress leader, Sir Surendranath Banerjee. The flag was designed by one of his followers.

The credit for raising an Indian flag on foreign soil for the first time goes to Madame Bhikhaiji Cama, at Stuttgart in Germany, on

August 22, 1907. She told the participants of an international forum: "I call upon you, gentlemen, to rise and salute this flag of Indian independence."

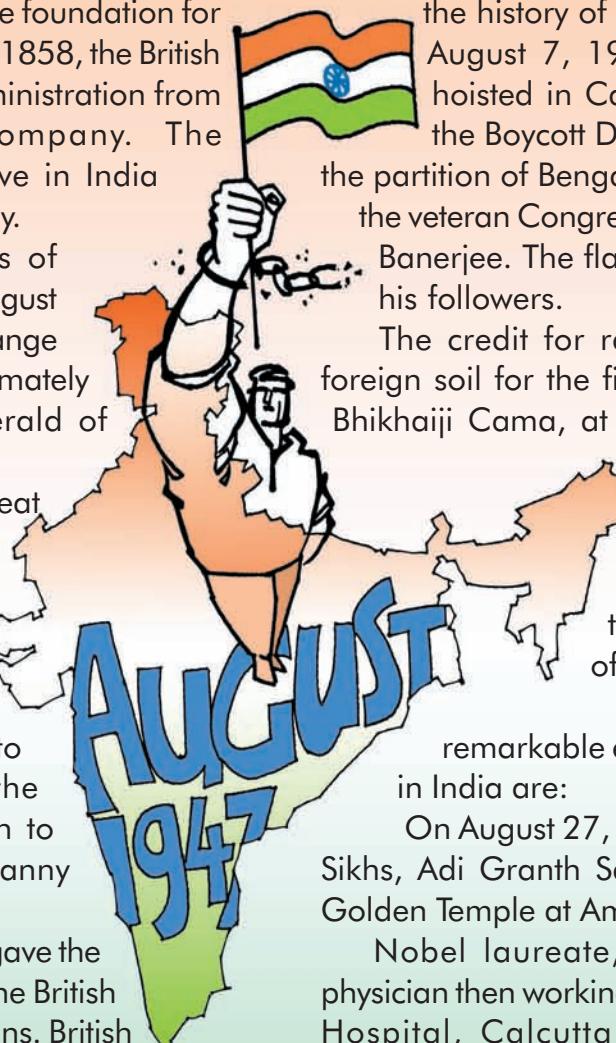
Some of the other remarkable events to happen in August in India are:

On August 27, 1604, the holy book of the Sikhs, *Adi Granth Sahib*, was installed in the Golden Temple at Amritsar.

Nobel laureate, Ronald Ross, a British physician then working in the Presidency General Hospital, Calcutta, on August 20, 1897, identified the malaria parasite, leading to the manufacture of preventive vaccine.

On August 4, 1967, the world's longest and tallest masonry dam, 'Nagarjuna Sagar', was commissioned in Andhra Pradesh.

In August that year, Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, who was popularly known as the Frontier Gandhi, was conferred with Bharat Ratna. He became the first non-Indian to be honoured with



India's highest civilian award, which was in recognition of his role in the country's freedom struggle.

Internet facility came to India on August 15, 1995. The government-owned Videsh Sanchar Nigam Limited became an Internet Services Provider (ISP).

## Momentous world events in August

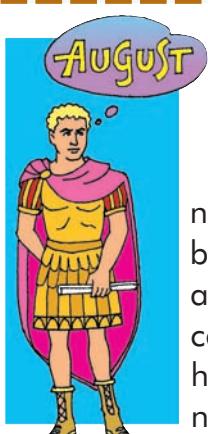
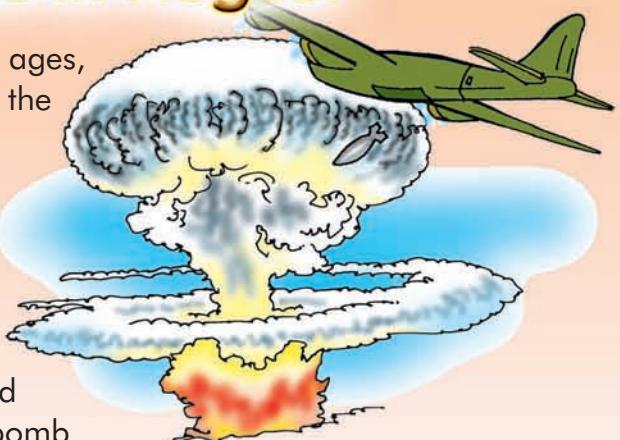
**A**ugust has been a remarkable month through the ages, with a record of episodes, particularly significant in the light of great changes in the world.

It was in August in the 19th century BC that Sodom and Gomorrah, cities on the Dead Sea, were destroyed by a shower of providential fire. In August in 79 AD, Pompei in Italy was destroyed by another shower of fire.

A different kind of fire, of a recent past, is associated with August. It was on August 6, 1945, that the atom bomb was dropped for the first time on Hiroshima. Another bomb was dropped on Nagasaki on August 9. This led to Japan making an unconditional surrender on August 14, 1945, bringing to an end World War II.

It was on August 18, 1945, a few days after the Japanese surrender, that the world was told about injuries to Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, founder of the Indian National Army, in an air crash in Taiwan, and his subsequent demise in a Japanese hospital. Mystery still shrouds that great leader, as a section of people in India still believe that Netaji did not die in that air crash.

The 45 years following the Second World War witnessed internal conflicts, involving outside countries, in Korea, Vietnam, Cambodia, West Asia, Sri Lanka, Iran and Iraq, and Britain and Argentina. India, too, had to go to war with China and Pakistan. In recent times, the first Gulf War



### The birth of August

Julius Caesar and his nephew Augustus Caesar were both born in July, then known as *Quintilis*. But since Julius came first, he thought it was his privilege to change the name of the month to July. So, the only thing that was left for Augustus, when he came to power, was to change the name of the following month, then known as *Sextilis*, to August to perpetuate his name!

of 1990 earned a dubious distinction because most of the major events could be watched "live" on the TV. It started in August that year when Iraq attacked Kuwait and annexed it on August 8. The same day, the USA moved its troops, navy, and air force to Saudi Arabia and first liberated Kuwait and then attacked Iraq. The Gulf War lasted six months.

August 1990 also saw the break up of the Soviet Union, which disappeared from the world map by the end of the year. The Supreme Soviet (parliament) banned the Communist Party; the Party General Secretary, Mr. Gorbachev, resigned from that post and became the President of Russia. It all marked the fall of Communism in that part of the world.

# PUZZLE DAZZLE

## That's Capital!

How good are you at world facts? The capital cities of various countries are hidden here – horizontally, vertically or diagonally. Once you have finished identifying them, you will be left with some letters. Unscramble them to get the capital city of yet another country. Get cracking, and bon voyage!

Here's a clue: the countries whose capitals are hidden in the grid are listed below:

K	K	H	A	R	T	O	U	M	R
E	A	K	I	E	V	B	A	A	O
T	M	A	L	E	O	N	V	C	M
H	P	I	M	G	A	D	U	C	E
S	A	O	O	R	S	A	S	R	S
I	L	T	I	N	K	A	I	A	O
B	A	T	A	A	A	G	N	S	J
I	E	H	S	W	A	H	L	A	N
Y	O	U	N	D	E	O	N	E	A
D	L	U	A	N	D	A	H	L	S



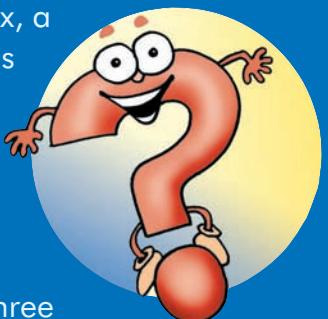
Fiji	Norway
Cameroon	Vietnam
Colombia	Albania
Costa Rica	Italy
Ghana	Maldives
Kyrgyzstan	Latvia
Angola	Qatar
Sudan	Togo
Uganda	Ukraine
Zambia	Yemen

- By Vidhya Raj

## Help the farmer

Bhola, a farmer, went to the town to purchase a fox, a hen, and a bagful of rice. On his way back, he has to cross a river. The bridge is very precarious and he can carry only one thing at a time while crossing it. If he leaves the fox and hen, the fox would eat the hen. If he left the hen and the rice bag, the hen would eat up the rice.

Bhola is clever, he reached his house with all the three items. How did he do it?



(Answers on page 64)



## Titles and trophy for Indian players



Three leading tennis players from India, who had entered the 117th Wimbledon this year, brought laurels to the country. Of them, 16-year-old **Sania Mirza** of Hyderabad created history by becoming the first Indian woman to win a Grand Slam title in the girls' doubles event. She partnered with Alisa Kleybanova of Russia, and the pair defeated Katerina Bohmova of the Czech Republic and Michaela Krajicek of Holland, 2–6, 6–3, 6–2.

For Sania, it was a sweet revenge, because the same Czech-Holland pair had earlier defeated Sania and her Indian companion Saana Bhambri in girls' doubles in the French Open.

It was after a gap of 51 years that an Indian woman was playing the Final in a Grand Slam event in Wimbledon. In 1952, Rita Dabar was runner-up in the girls' singles. She was the first Indian woman to reach the Final of any Grand Slam tournament.

Sania Mirza chose the Russian Alisa just three days before the Wimbledon matches began. At that time, Alisa was yet to make up her mind, whether she would play singles or doubles. But, when Sania suggested that they paired together, Alisa knew that they stood a good chance to win the title. In one of the matches, Sania served at 104 mph, which compares well with singles champion Serena Williams's 107 mph.

Sania made her mark first at Manila last year when she won two matches at the WTO tournament. It was the first time that an Indian woman was winning a WTO title abroad. Later, at the Asian Games at Busan, she won a medal in mixed doubles, pairing with Leander Paes. She then became the youngest woman to win an Asian Games Medal. Sania is now ranked No. 3 in world junior doubles individual ranking.

When India's **Leander Paes** and Martina Navratilova won the mixed doubles title, defeating Andy Ram of Israel and Anastassia Rodionova of Russia, 6–3, 6–3, the veteran US champion collected her 20th Wimbledon title, to equal Billie Jean King's record for the maximum number of Wimbledon titles. Martina did not wait for a single moment to give all the credit to Leander Paes and his play for her own success. Incidentally, Leander Paes was only seven years old when he saw Martina "in action" for the first ever time!



Leander Paes and David Rikl of the Czech Republic had earlier come up to the semi-finals in men's doubles, but they were beaten by **Mahesh Bhupati** and Max Mirnyi of Belarus. However, they lost to Toole Woodbridge (Australia) and Jonas Bjorkman (Sweden) in the finals. Though not a title winner, Mahesh Bhupati did collect the runner-up trophy.

Indian tennis never had such a streak of success in Wimbledon earlier.

- K.R.

## ★ What are hieroglyphics?

— Suvrata Bose, Hooghly

People of ancient Egypt developed a kind of sign-writing, which was given the nomenclature hieroglyphics or sacred writing by the Greeks. The Egyptians began with making line drawings to convey messages, and when they became complicated, they resorted to simpler sign-writing, found mostly on temples and tombs. It was difficult to decipher these writings till about two centuries ago. A tablet, which later came to be called the Rosetta Stone, had sign-writings which could be deciphered.

## ★ What is Kabuki? Is it more ancient than any of the dance forms of India?

— Shivani Shirodkar, Pune

The word Kabuki literally means 'singing and dancing'. It is a type of play or drama popularly performed in Japan, and tells a story through simultaneous singing and dancing. Records show that this art form developed around 1600 AD. A 'temple-maiden' (someone like the devadasis of India) called Okuni is believed to have staged Kabuki with women playing all the characters. It took another 30 or 40 years before it was decided



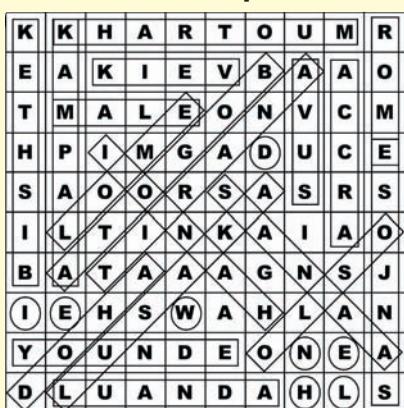
that male characters would be depicted by men. In Kabuki, the players wear elaborate costumes and have their faces heavily painted (like in Kathakali). Heroes invariably are dressed in white costume, while the villains are distinguishable by their red dress. The actors are expected to sing, supported by instrumental music.

Nearly akin to Kabuki is the dance drama of Kerala known as Kathakali (story-play) which, of course, has a very ancient origin. In Kathakali, a troupe of singers and instrumentalists provide the narration and music, and the artistes have only to depict the story with facial expressions and body movements. They are not expected to sing. Till recent times, even women's roles were enacted by male players.

## PUZZLE DAZZLE

### Answers

#### That's Capital



New Delhi

#### Help the farmer

Bhola first took the hen and left it on the other bank. Then he took the fox, and brought back the hen with him. Now he took the rice bag and left it on the other bank. He came back and fetched the hen.

**Quiz Answers**

Page-12 — Five

Page-17 — Rajendra Prasad; Mountbatten (upto July 1948).

Page-59 — At Noakhali in Bengal trying to ease communal tension; 1948; Sucheta Kripalani (she was CM of Uttar Pradesh from 1963 to 1967).

## FUN TIMES

### Answers

1. 1. Pebbles near the fox's tail, 2. Pocket, 3. Tail of the fox, 4. Grasshopper's shirt, 5. Leaves on the right, 6. Lines on the tree trunk, 7. Pebbles between the fox and grasshopper, 8. Leaf on the left.
2. a - v, b - i, c - iv, d - vi, e - iii, f - ii.
3. There are five crocodiles and D is the longest crocodile.

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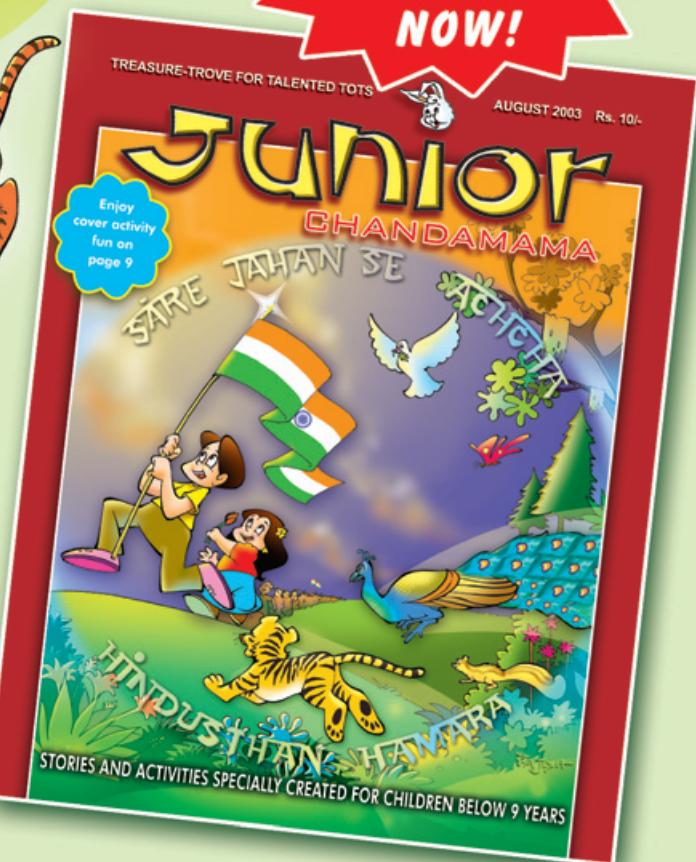
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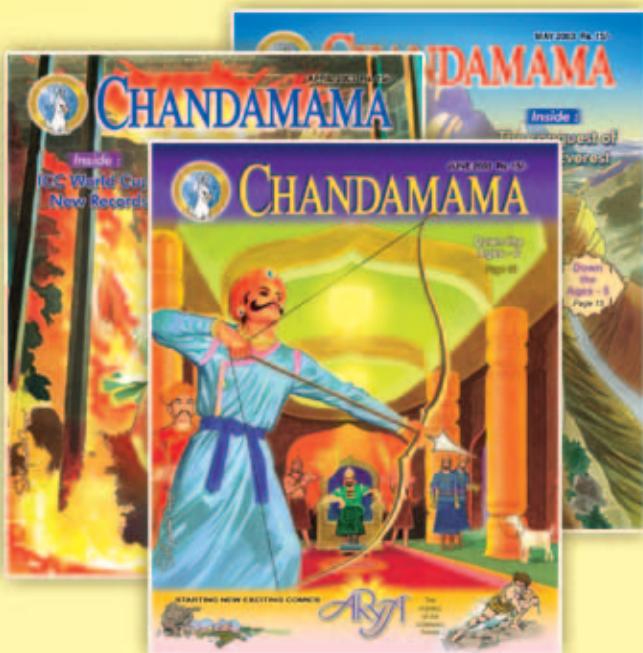
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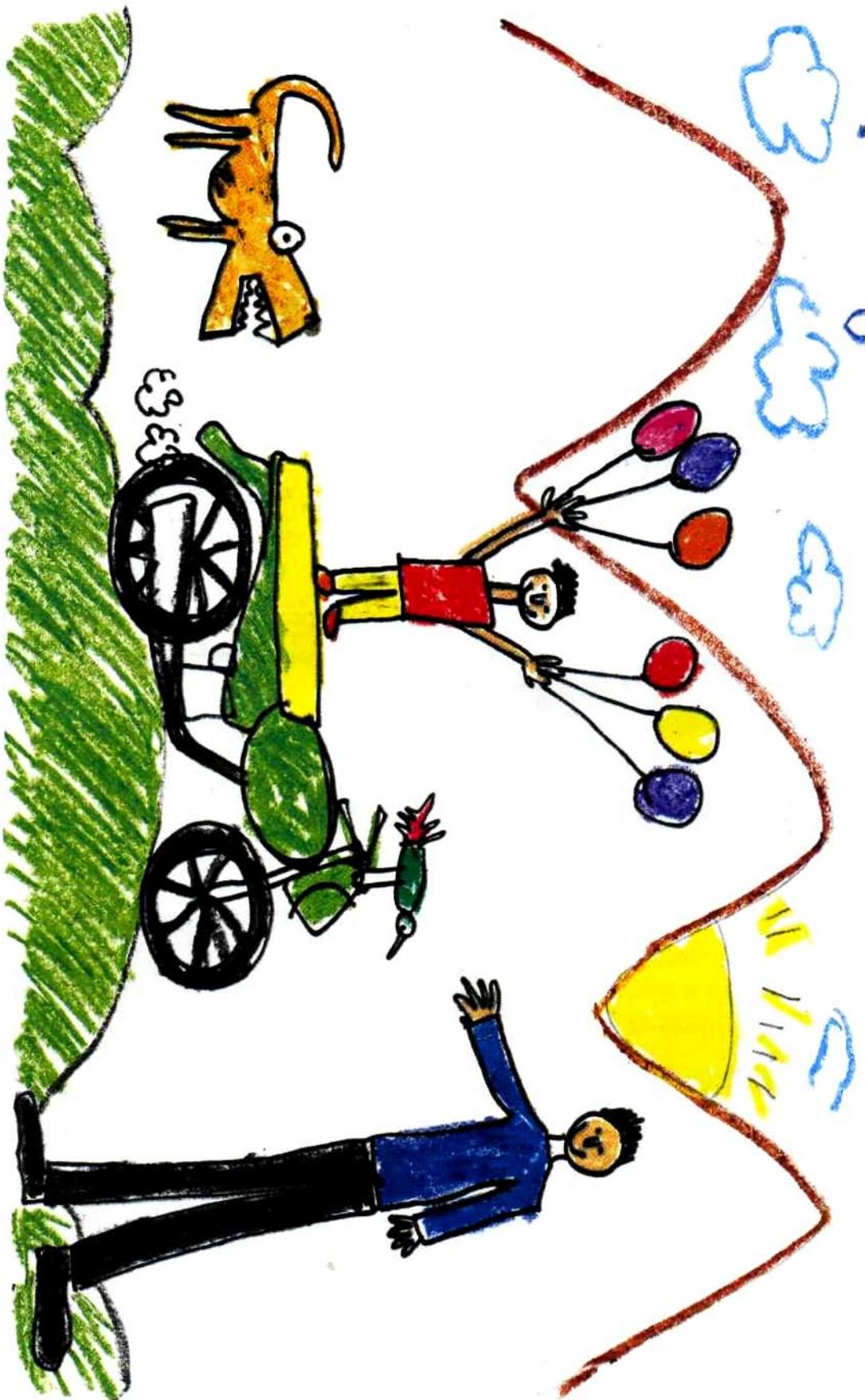
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